



Evaluating an Androgynous Brand Extension: The Gender Identity/Gendered Brand Relationship and Influencing Factors

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ABSTRACT

Gender identification behaviour has altered drastically within the last decade. Consequently, there has been a noteworthy rise in the amount of androgynous individuals. Gender identity congruity theory posits that individuals display more favourable behavioural outcomes towards brands that possess similar images or identities to their own. Further, contemporary consumers express their identities via their brand choices. Thus, there is a strong implication that introducing an androgynous brand could prove to be a lucrative strategy for marketers. However, gendering brands as either masculine or feminine prevails as the most commonly employed strategy to differentiate a brand and appeal to target audiences.

Introducing androgynous brands through a brand extension could prove to be less risky and costly than introducing such a brand as a novel, stand-alone offering. This study examined gender identity's potential influence on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension. Further, it investigated the potential influence of three key factors on this central relationship: self-concept, product category and the gender of the parent brand. With regard to these moderators, it was posited that first, if the brand's image aligned with one's self-concept the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension would be more favourable. Distinction was made between actual and ideal self-concept. Second, a distinction could be made between functional and symbolic product categories with regards to the influence that gender identity exerted on brand extension evaluation. And third, that the gender of the parent brand would influence the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension. Subsequently, a 2 x 2 factorial design experiment was administered to a quota-controlled non-probability sample of Generation Y consumers.

The findings demonstrated that gender identity influences the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension. Furthermore, self-concept moderated this relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. The product category wherein the androgynous brand extension was implemented was evidenced to affect individuals' evaluation of the brand extension, with the one introduced in the symbolic product category receiving more favourable evaluations than the extension introduced in the functional category. The gender of the parent brand exerted no influence on brand extension evaluation, where androgynous brand extensions from both feminine and masculine parent brands were evaluated similarly. Self-concept also exerted an effect on brand extension evaluation, with ideal self-concept exerting a stronger influence than actual self-concept. Lastly, individuals were shown to prefer an androgynous brand to a masculine or feminine one.

The principal inference resulting from this research is that marketers should strongly consider introducing an androgynous brand extension should they possess a feminine or masculine brand within the clothing, deodorant, or similar products categories. Respondents evaluated the androgynous brand extension favourably across both

assessed product categories and regardless of whether the brand extension was introduced from a masculine or feminine parent brand. This was observed for all gender identity segments. It is imperative that managers take gender identity and self-concept into account as these identity aspects exert noteworthy influences on individuals' consumption behaviours. However, managers should take note of the evidenced interaction between gender identity and self-concept. Where individuals perceive there to be a high level of congruence between their self-concept and the androgynous brand extension, individuals with high levels of masculinity should not be targeted as they displayed negative evaluations of the brand extension.

Keywords: *gender identity, gendered brand, androgynous brand, brand extension, self-concept, product category, brand evaluation*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

During the past decade, gender identification behaviour of individuals in Western societies has changed considerably (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Society has witnessed a broad scale condemning of gender stereotyping, a rise in the frequency of cross-gendered societal behaviour, and an erosion of previously rigid gender boundaries, for a softer, more fluid understanding of gender (Fugate & Philips, 2010). This drastic alteration in gender identification by both sexes is best personified by a sex role convergence, in which the conventional condemnation of cross-sexed behaviour has dissipated (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Witness, for example, the global acceptance and positive attitude towards Caitlin Jenner, the now transsexual Bruce Jenner: Former Olympic decathlon champion and party to Kardashian fame. Thus, the conventional dichotomy that sketched females as “nurturers” and males as “breadwinners” has long since been discarded in favour of both males and females assuming roles typically associated with the opposite sex. As such, men are progressively identifying as feminine, women as masculine, and individuals are more likely than ever to classify themselves as androgynous (simultaneously masculine and feminine) (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Kliamenakis, 2011).

Given that postmodern consumers employ brands and products to both create and express their identities (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Hogg, Cox & Keeling, 2000), as well as the fact that individuals typically prefer brands that possess a similar identity to their own (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Robbie & Neale, 2012), there is a strong implication that androgynous brands could realize significant success. Furthermore, the objective of marketing is, in essence, to target higher performing segments that provide greater returns through specialization and customization (Greene & Greene, 2008). Moreover, given the current economic climate and strong global competition, companies are progressively pursuing novel ways of furthering themselves (Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Doraiswamy, 2011; Frieden, 2013). Introducing an androgynous brand could allow firms to satisfy both of these contemporary pursuits. In fact, Fugate and Philips (2010) stated that firms must consider shifting towards androgynous brands should they hope to realize long-term success.

It would appear certain industries are already profiting from this societal shift in gender identification behaviour. The unisex fragrance category in Western Europe, alone, was worth approximately \$746 million in 2009 (Research & Markets, 2014). In fact, such offerings span numerous category types, ranging from clothing to

moisturisers. Certain authors have described this as a “unisex trend in consumer goods” (Jung & Lee, 2006: 67).

One practical manner of introducing an androgynous brand, that would allow companies to leverage existing brand equity and minimize introduction costs and failure rates, is to do so via a brand extension (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012; Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). This practise employs the existing brand name and extends into a similar or dissimilar category (Gierl & Huettl, 2011; Viot, 2011). Thus, firms would introduce an androgynous brand extension from their existing brand.

Within this postmodern context, researchers have highlighted the ever-dissipating explanatory and predictive power of sex with regards to consumer behaviour (Firat & Venkatesh, 1993; Kacen, 2000; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ulrich, 2013). Instead, in an endeavour to maximise their understanding of the consumer, marketers have turned towards a variable that appears to possess superior predictive power: gender identity (Neale, Robbie & Martin, 2015; Robbie & Neale, 2012). Described as an individual’s psychological gender, gender identity classifies individuals as possessing one of four identities: masculine, feminine, androgynous (high co-presence of masculinity and femininity) and undifferentiated (low levels of both masculinity and femininity) (Bem, 1974; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Contemporary studies assert that gender identity is both a better predictor of consumer behaviour, and a superior segmentation variable, as compared to sex (Costa, Terracciano & McCrae, 2001; Robbie & Neale, 2012). Gender identity is a central aspect of the postmodern consumer and, more importantly, directs consumer behaviour (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Robbie & Neale, 2012).

This study examines gender identity and its potential influence on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension. In investigating the relationship between these variables, a number of potential influencing factors need to be considered: First, another key identity dimension is examined in this research, namely self-concept. Self-concept is acknowledged as being a vital variable in comprehending consumer behaviour, affecting a plethora of behavioural outcomes including attitudes, preferences and purchase intentions (Parker, 2009; Rhee & Johnson, 2012; Quester, Karunaratna & Goh, 2000). Second, product category type has emerged as a crucial construct that should be explored when examining brand extensions and evaluation (Jung & Lee, 2006), as gender identity may be more influential in decisions regarding aspirational or symbolic products as opposed to everyday purchases. Moreover, Kliamenakis (2011) motivated that it was important that future studies explore product category within the context of gender identity congruence with androgynous brands. Last, the gender of the parent brand should also be examined within this context, given its potential impact on behavioural outcomes that arises, chiefly, from the disparity amid the manner in which society regards masculine and feminine traits (Alreck, 1994; Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013; Wolin, 2003).

Against this backdrop, the intention of this study is to answer the following research questions: Does gender identity influence an individual's evaluation of an androgynous brand extension? If so, is this relationship impacted by self-concept, product category type or gender of the parent brand? More specifically, this research will be chiefly directed by the following six research objectives:

- (1) To determine if gender identity has a direct effect on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension.
- (2) To determine whether the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation is moderated by self-concept.
- (3) To establish if there is a difference between the two product category types in terms of evaluation of the androgynous brand extension.
- (4) To ascertain if there is a difference between the two parent brand genders in terms of the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension.
- (5) To determine whether self-concept has a direct effect on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension.
- (6) To determine whether there is a difference between the evaluation of an androgynous brand and a masculine or feminine parent brand

With regards to potential academic value, this study potentially augments the literature in three key manners. Firstly, gender identity congruity with an androgynous brand extension is yet to be examined within the literature. Secondly, this study is the first of its kind to directly compare consumer evaluations of a gendered brand (masculine/ feminine) with an androgynous brand extension. This comparison facilitates insight into whether, indeed, individuals prefer an androgynous brand. Lastly, despite the abundance of research that explores self-concept, the examination of self-concept as a potential moderator has been confined to a handful of human resource management studies.

With regards to the managerial contributions of this study: Firstly, managers will gain an understanding of the manner in which individuals evaluate an androgynous extension. Secondly, they can adjust segmentation strategies in accordance with which gender identity segment is found to react most favourably to an androgynous extension; as well as which aspect of the self-concept their advertising endeavours should attempt to connect with. Third, this research will depict which product categories are more likely to maximise the success of the extension. Finally, this study investigates whether androgynous brand extensions are privy only to certain gendered parent brands (i.e. masculine or feminine parent brands).

This chapter forms the foundation of the study that follows and is arranged in the following manner. Firstly, this study presents and discusses the background against which this research endeavor is assumed. The research questions that guide this work are then formally set forth along with the research objectives. Next, a brief summary of the methodology is forwarded. The penultimate section of this chapter then maps

the prospective relevance of this study within both academic and industry domains. Lastly, this introductory chapter then profiles the structure of the ensuing dissertation that follows.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The following section introduces the theory that underpins this research. Firstly, the study is contextualized via a discussion addressing postmodernism and symbolism. Combined, these sections emphasize that a postmodern consumer is constantly fabricating and communicating their self-established identity through the employment of products and brands. Once this is understood, the discussion first focuses on the identity aspects of the individual: namely gender identity and self-concept. The manner in which these aspects influence consumer behaviour is then discussed via a brief examination of gender identity congruity and self-concept congruity. Focus then shifts to the items that these individual employ to create and express their identities, namely products and brands, with emphasis being on the latter. Gendered brand image and product category type, two central constructs of the study, are introduced thereafter. Lastly, a potentially less costly and less risky manner of introducing a new brand is introduced, namely that of a brand extension. This is narrowed from a general introduction to brand extensions to the notion of an androgynous brand extension, which is the focus of this study.

1.2.1 Postmodernism and Symbolism

Postmodernism has seen consumers fixated with reconfiguring their personal identities through the employment of cultural resources (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998; Gabriel & Lang, 1995; Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013). It theorizes the self as something an individual dynamically constructs, partly via consumption (Fournier, 1998; Gabriel & Lang, 1995; Giddens, 1993; Wu, Borgerson & Schroder, 2013). Here, products and brands are utilized to establish, alter and recreate themselves through the exhibition of acquired goods (Baudrillard, 1988; Belk, 1988). This pursuit of self-identity is a vital element of postmodern consumption and, as such, it is imperative that marketers comprehend the notion and subtleties of the self, the symbolic significance of items and the function brands perform (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998).

The idea that brands transfer information that extends past their functional product utility is a vital tenet of brand research (Kim & Hyun, 2013; Parker, 2009). Literature stemming from various disciplines, including psychology, anthropology and consumer behaviour claim that this arises as a result of an individual's employment of symbolic brand meaning for personal and social expression (Belk, 1988; Zinkham & Hong, 1991).

Within the consumer behaviour realm, individuals employ possessions and objects

(such as products and brands) as symbolic communication tools in an attempt to communicate a suitable image and to receive positive responses (Baumgartner, 2002; Belk, 1988; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). As such, self-enhancement takes place through links with objects that have appropriate social significance and that elicit positive responses from important references (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Parker, 2009). The influence of symbolic meaning of a product is based on the connection between an individual's self-image and the product symbol (a subjective meaning allocated to a product) (Zinkhan & Hong, 1991).

Thus, postmodern consumers are constantly creating their identities, assisted through the employment of brands and products. Having gleaned an understanding of the context within which this study is conducted, it is necessary to now focus on two central identity dimensions of individuals, namely gender identity and self-concept.

1.2.2 Gender Identity

Gender identity, briefly introduced earlier, is an amalgamation of an individual's physiological gender characteristics, social gender roles and gender orientations (Kacen, 2000; Ye & Robertson, 2012); or the degree to which a person identifies with masculine or feminine personality characteristics (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Gender identity is categorized into four segments according to an individual's respective levels of masculinity and femininity. These include: masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated (Bem, 1974).

Consumption behaviour is understood to be in line with an individual's gender identity (Fugate & Philips, 2010). Particularly, gender identity has been found to affect an individual's level of cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, product involvement, purchase intent and males' responses to advertisements (Fischer & Arnold, 1994; Martin & Gnoth, 2009; Reed, Forehand, Puntoni & Warlop, 2012; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Individuals typically purchase in manners that are in alignment with their notion of self (Sirgy, 1982). In an effort to uphold gender image integrity, individuals purchase products that have a gender identity congruent with their own (Fugate & Philips, 2010). This is referred to as gender identity brand image congruity, or more simply as gender identity congruity. Literature affirms a congruent relationship amid gender identity and an individual's reaction to a gendered brand, including brand preference and attitudinal loyalty (Robbie & Neale, 2012), such that favourable responses (including purchase intent and brand preference) are repeatedly reported where congruence is achieved (Robbie & Neale, 2012).

Numerous recent studies have concluded that gender identity is both a better predictor of consumer behaviour (Robbie & Neale 2012; Costa *et al.*, 2001; Jaffe 1994) as well as a more appropriate segmentation variable than biological sex. Moreover, it has been noted that an individual will more readily identify with a brand that they

perceive to be congruent with their gender identity, than one they believe to be congruent with their biological sex (Robbie & Neale, 2012).

Having addressed gender identity, it is now necessary to turn the focus to the second salient identity aspect of this research, namely self-concept.

1.2.3 Self-Concept

Self-concept alludes to the manner in which a person perceives himself or herself to be as an individual (Parker, 2009). It is a multidimensional opinion of one's self and consists of two fundamental facets, namely: the "real" or "actual-self" and the "ideal-self" (Aaker, 1999; Abel, Buff & O'Neill, 2013; Gould, 1991; Graeff, 1996; Sirgy, 1986; Sutherland, Marshall & Parker, 2004). Moreover, self-image is a vital variable in comprehending consumer behaviour (Parker, 2005, 2009; Quester *et al.*, 2000), affecting purchase and brand decisions (Belk, 1988; Plummer, 2000; Sirgy, 1982; Zinkham & Hong, 1991), attitudes towards brands, consumer satisfaction, as well as brand preferences (Ebrahim, 2011; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Mehta, 1999; Rhee & Johnson, 2012; Sirgy, Grewal, Mangleburg, Park, Chon, Claiborne, Johar & Berkman, 1997; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

Furthermore, numerous authors have asserted that symbolic purchasing behaviour should be examined within the framework of the consumer's self-concept, which signifies the manner in which an individual perceives him or herself (Kleine, Kleine & Allen, 1995; Richins, 1994; Zinkhan & Hong, 1991).

Having addressed identity, the focus now shifts towards the items that individuals employ to create and express these identities. Accordingly, the ensuing section first introduces the concept of brand image broadly and then narrows it to gendered brand image. Thereafter, it introduces the notion of product category, differentiating between the two category types. Finally, brand extensions are briefly addressed.

1.2.4 Brand Image and Gendered Brand Image

Utilitarian dissimilarities amid products and services are progressively eroding, with individuals conducting purchase resolutions relative to product or brand image (Cova, 1996; Parker, 2009). As such, it is vital that marketers understand brand image and the influence that it may exert on consumer behaviour. Unfortunately, despite the fact that brand image remains a fundamental tenet of self-congruity (Parker, 2009) and consumer behaviour research (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990), little focus has been placed on it (Parker, 2009).

The assigning of human characteristics to brands has been identified as a manner of creating enduring relationships with consumers whom have been found to possess an inherent necessity to 'humanize' objects prior to engaging with them (Romaniuk & Ehrenburg, 2012). A fundamental dimension of brand image comprises of gender (i.e.

gendered image), typically arising as a result of animism: the act of ascribing human traits to inanimate objects (Romaniuk & Ehrenburg, 2012). Grohmann (2009) described brand gender as the group of human personality characteristics linked to masculinity and femininity appropriate and suited to brands. She developed a scale to assess the perceived gendered brand personality (or image) of a brand, noting that a brand, like humans, could be categorized as being masculine, feminine, androgynous or undifferentiated. The gender of the brand has been found to affect brand evaluation (Jung & Lee, 2006).

The majority of brands attempt to create or reinforce strong gender connotations via advertising efforts, narratives and packaging (Veg & Nyeck, 2007). Furthermore, despite the deteriorating dichotomization of men and women in society, brand gendering prevails as one of the most commonly employed strategies to differentiate a brand and appeal to target audiences (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Having introduced brand image, it is necessary to explore another aspect of the items that individuals employ to create their identities: the product itself.

1.2.5 Product Category

Products are believed to be utilized either as a means to satisfy an instrumental function, or consumed for affective reasons, sensory satisfaction and for pleasure (Tomaseti & Ruiz, 2009; Walpuski, 2010). The former is referred to as utilitarian or functional products, while the latter are called symbolic or hedonic products (Tomaseti & Ruiz, 2009).

Consumers acquire hedonic and utilitarian products for different purposes. Symbolic products are bought for the hedonism and enjoyment that they will offer (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Walpuski, 2010). As such, the motivation to acquire these objects surpasses the simple utility they may offer (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). The hedonistic aspect that drives the purchase and consumption of such items reinforces the fact that these products are affect-weighted (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). This high degree of implicit affect is prone to elicit significant emotional reactions in owners (Ang & Lim, 2006; Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). Consequently, hedonic (or symbolic) products are expected to influence the affective element of consumer attitude more significantly than with utilitarian products (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012).

Utilitarian products, conversely, are procured primarily to satisfy functional requirements (Voss, Spangenberg & Grohmann, 2003). As a result, such products are not intrinsically affect-laden (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). The purchase choice of these products is typically motivated by a cognitive process rather than consumer affect (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012; Walpuski, 2010).

Given that prior studies have concluded that the product category type affects behavioural outcomes (Cho, Im, Fjermestad & Hiltz, 2003; Jung & Lee, 2006; Pan,

Kuo, Pan & Tu, 2013), it was deemed crucial to incorporate this variable into this research. Therefore, one symbolic and one functional product category were investigated in this study. Clothing was employed to represent the former, while deodorants were utilized to signify the functional category. These choices are motivated later on (section 4.5.1).

1.2.6 Brand Extension

Brand extension entails the introduction of either similar or different products into similar (Keller 2008; Viot, 2011; Völckner & Sattler, 2006) or different markets, utilizing a recognised brand name (Gierl & Huettl, 2011; Viot, 2011), described as the parent brand (Thompson & Strutton, 2012; Völckner & Sattler, 2006). Brand extensions have materialized as a widely employed strategy (Frieden, 2013; Gierl & Huettl, 2011; Srivastava & Sharma, 2013), enabling companies to expand portfolios and minimize risk, costs and possible failure linked to the launching of a new product (Martinez & Pina, 2003; Srivastava & Sharma, 2013).

Brand extensions' relative attractiveness is based on two fundamental factors. Firstly, implementing a brand extension is comparatively inexpensive (Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Doust & Esfahlan, 2012) when compared to the launching of a new brand, where the price can easily surpass \$100 million (Kharmouch, Holmes & Ihlwan, 2001; Voss & Gammoh, 2004). Secondly, it enables companies to leverage existing brand equity (Aaker, 1991; d'Astous, Colbert & Fournier, 2007; Viot, 2011) and brand image (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Stegemann, 2006) and, as such, substantially reduces the risk (or high failure rates) associated with brand introduction (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Batra, Lenk & Wedel, 2010; Keller, 2003; Völckner & Sattler, 2006), enabling companies to penetrate new markets more quickly; and often more effectively (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Pitta & Katsanis, 1995).

The acceptance levels for brand extensions are significantly higher than for new products that employ new brand names (Viot, 2011). This is largely attributed to the fact that brand attitude and associations are transmitted to the new product with an extension (Viot, 2011). Additionally, brand extensions are also expected to influence the image of the parent brand in a positive manner (Balachander & Ghose, 2003).

Given the progressively increasing amount of androgynous individuals (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Kliamenakis, 2011), the fact that these postmodern consumers employ brands to create and express their identities (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Hogg *et al.*, 2000) and that they prefer brands with an image or identity similar to their own (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Robbie & Neale, 2012), there is, as mentioned previously, a strong implication that an androgynous brand could realise noteworthy success. Taken together with the aforementioned section that introduced the relative attractiveness of introducing a new brand via a brand extension, as compared to the launch of a new stand-alone brand, this study examines an androgynous brand *extension*.

Having presented a brief synopsis of key theory and, as such, providing a foundation for this research effort, the particular problem statement and research objectives must now be addressed.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The background to the study shows that gender roles are assimilating in a postmodern society, but gendered brands are still dominating the market. While one may expect consumers to prefer brands that are congruent to their own gender identity, there is very little research on the role that gender identity has on consumers' evaluation of brands and their extensions. Literature asserts that gender identity may exert a significant direct effect on individuals' evaluations of an androgynous brand extension. Moreover, literature affirms that the exploration of gender identity is more appropriate than sex in a postmodern context given the former's superior predictive power (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Additionally, extant literature proclaims that self-concept, product category and the gender of parent brand affect behavioural outcomes and as such, may influence the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. Informed by this existing state of the literature, this research was guided by the following research questions:

Does gender identity influence an individual's evaluation of an androgynous brand extension? If so, is this relationship impacted by self-concept, product category type or gender of the parent brand?

In order to address these research questions, the following research objectives were advanced and directed this research.

- (1) To determine if gender identity has a direct effect on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension.
- (2) To determine whether the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation is moderated by self-concept.
- (3) To establish if there is a difference between the two product category types in terms of evaluation of the androgynous brand extension.
- (4) To ascertain if there is a difference between the two parent brand genders in terms of the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension.
- (5) To determine whether self-concept has a direct effect on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension.
- (6) To determine whether there is a difference between the evaluation of an androgynous brand and a masculine or feminine parent brand

The methodology employed to explore these research objectives is now briefly summarized. A thorough depiction of these methodological aspects and justifications thereof is presented in the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

As the chief aim of this research was to assess the impact of gender identity on extension evaluation, a conclusive research design was adopted, exploring certain casual relationships. Furthermore, the study assumed a 2 (product category type: functional vs. symbolic) x 2 (gender of parent brand: masculine or feminine) factorial design to investigate the aforementioned relationship. This experimental design was considered the most appropriate for investigating complex relationships while controlling for various influencing factors (Malhotra, 2010).

Self-administered questionnaires were employed using a quota-controlled convenience sample of Generation Y, university students. The use of Generation Y respondents was motivated by three key factors. Firstly, the employment of students as participants in research is typical in brand extension research (Grohmann, 2009; Jung & Lee, 2006; Monga & John, 2010), as well as studies that explore gender identity (Frieden, 2013; Ye & Robertson, 2012) and gendered brands and products (Azar, 2013; Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Jung & Lee, 2006). Secondly, Generation Y is an age cohort second in size only to the Baby Boomers, and is an attractive market segment of substantial marketing significance (Fugate & Philips, 2010). It is, therefore, imperative that marketers attempt to better understand their behaviours. Third, Generation Y has grown up in an era where brand consumption is not merely the act of purchasing, but rather a means of self-expression (Backwell & Mitchell, 2003), whereby these consumers utilize brands and products to define and express themselves (Kuester, Hess, Hinkel & Young, 2007; Kleine *et al.*, 1995; Sengupta, Dahl & Gorn, 2002). Consequently, this generation is unlikely to exhibit conventional gender-oriented consumption behaviour (Fugate & Philips, 2010).

The use of quota sampling ensured that certain traits (including sex and age) of the final resultant sample mirrored that of the target population. Furthermore, prior comparable studies (e.g. Azar, 2013; Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Grohmann, 2009; Monga & John, 2010; Ye & Robertson, 2012) provided support for choice of this procedure.

Two key considerations influenced final targeted sample size. Firstly, the sample size attained in other influential works within this domain was appraised. Here, final sample sizes ranged from n=150 to n= 240 (Azar, 2013, Jung & Lee, 2006; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Secondly, the use of the aforementioned statistical analysis techniques (ANOVA, t-tests, linear regression, MMR) necessitated certain sample size requirements (Siddiqui, 2013). Balancing these concerns with both time and budgetary constraints, a minimum final realised sample of n=240 was sought.

The sample was exposed to one of four treatments that presented the respondent with a hypothetical androgynous brand extension introduced in either the functional or

symbolic category; extended from either an originally masculine or feminine parent brand. Following a procedure of data preparation, the final dataset was subjected to Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), t-tests, linear regression and moderated multiple regression (MMR) statistical analyses to support or reject the proposed hypotheses. The findings of this study deliver numerous potential contributions to both literature and industry. These are outlined in the section that follows.

1.5 IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This study endeavored to contribute to brand extension, gendered brand and consumer behaviour literature by testing whether an individual's gender identity influences their evaluation of an androgynous brand extension. Few studies explore gender identity congruence with an androgynous extension, and fewer still with empirical data. Investigating this gender identity gendered brand relationship within an extension context has the potential to generate numerous noteworthy contributions to marketing.

This investigation is arguably vital given: (a) that gender identity possesses significant predictive power regarding consumer behavioural outcomes, (b) the progressively increasing amount of androgynous individuals, and (c) the fact that individuals prefer brands with a similar identity to their own (Costa *et al.*, 2001; Fugate & Philips, 2010; Robbie & Neale, 2012).

Despite the abundance of research that explores self-concept, the examination of self-concept as a potential moderator has been confined to a handful of human resource management studies. If a research effort aims to comprehensively explore self-concept, this potential moderating effect of self-concept (on the central relationship between gender identity and brand evaluation) cannot be ignored. Thus, this study addresses noteworthy theoretical gaps in extant literature.

Moreover, insight could be ascertained into whether, indeed, an androgynous brand extension could yield lucrative returns. Specific insight outlining conditions that maximise the potential success of such an extension could be gleaned. Firstly, if gender identity influences consumers' evaluations of an androgynous brand extension, existing segmentation and targeting models can be adjusted in accordance with the particular gender identity segment(s) that favoured the androgynous brand extension. Secondly, advertising efforts can be tailored to appeal to and create connections with the aspect of the self (i.e. actual or ideal self-concept) that influenced consumers' behaviours more strongly. Creating connections in this way will likely increase loyalty, which is vital to a firm's long-term success (Romaniuk & Ehrenburg, 2012). Third, understanding which particular product category and which particular gendered parent brand favour an androgynous brand extension will facilitate a more successful introduction of such a brand, restricting introduction failure rates which are typically high (Roll, 2010). Lastly, positioning strategies can

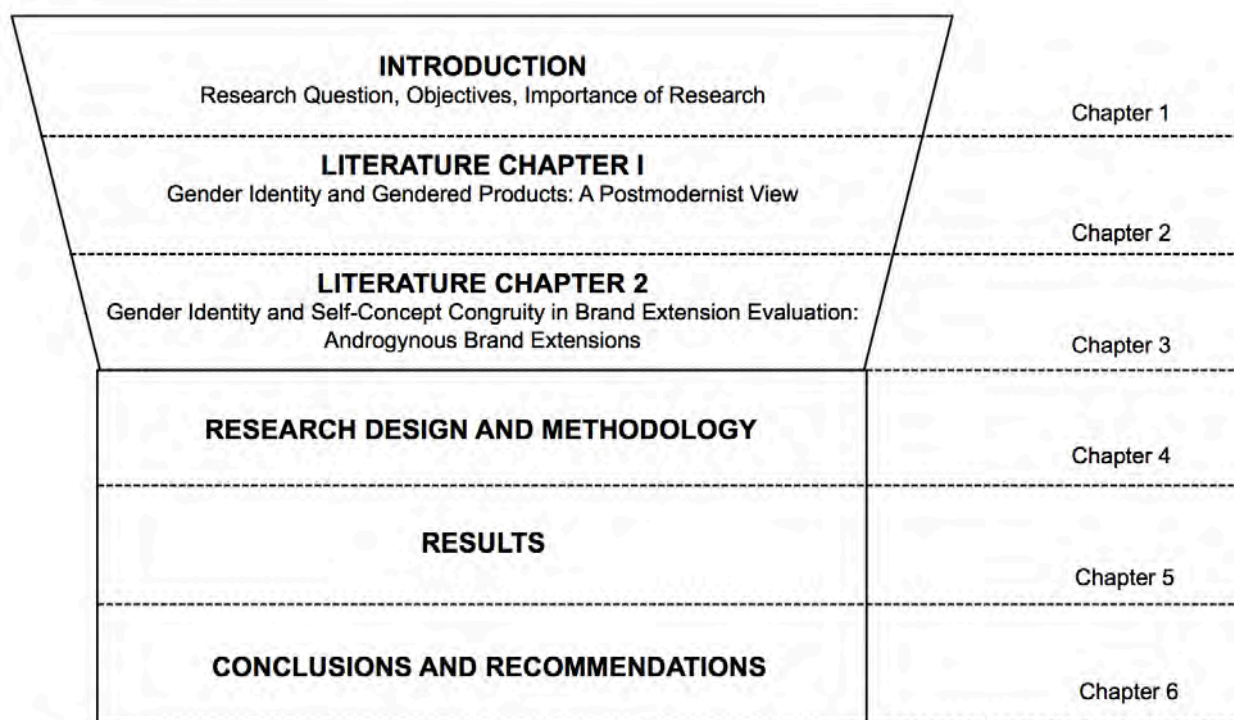
be adjusted in accordance with whether individuals preferred masculine and feminine gendered brands to androgynous ones. The outline of the study is now addressed.

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation consists of six chapters, structured as follows. The first chapter introduces the study and forms the foundation for the research endeavor that ensues. This chapter provided a succinct contextualization of the research problem and consequently cited relevant theory concerning postmodernism, symbolism, gender identity, self-concept, brand image, product categories and brand extensions. Thereafter, it forwarded the research questions that guide this work and formally presented the related research objectives. This introductory chapter then set forth a synopsis of the methodological considerations. Finally, this chapter motivated the significance of this research to both academia and industry alike.

Figure 1 outlines the overall structure of this dissertation, highlighting key components included in each chapter.

Figure 1: Outline of Chapters



Chapter 2 of this dissertation contextualizes this work, addressing key theory within the realms of postmodernism, symbolism, gender identity, self-concept, brand image, gendered products and brands and introduces the concept of androgynous brand extensions. As such, it depicts the contemporary consumer as an individual fixated

with the continual fabrication of identity, assisted to a large extent by brands and products. Further, it motivates that gender identity, in such an environment, possesses substantial explanative power with regards to behavioural outcomes. Theory in support of exploring brand gender instead of product gender is provided.

Chapter 3 expands on the concept of brand extensions, forwarding their relative attractiveness, as compared to introducing a stand-alone new brand. It also serves to introduce literature regarding the remainder of constructs explored in this dissertation, as well as expands discussions initiated in Chapter 2. This chapter also outlines the manner in which the various concepts are interconnected and are to be explored in this work. Accordingly, the formal hypotheses that guide this research are set forth. Particularly, this chapter sets forth, in detail, theoretical justification supporting the proposed main effect of gender identity on brand extension evaluation. Similarly, literature in support of a similar main effect of self-concept on extension evaluation is provided. Theoretical rationalization of dissimilar effects evoked by self-concept is set forth, with support, in particular, of the anticipated stronger influence of ideal self-concept on evaluation, as compared to actual self-concept. Theory upholding the postulated moderating influence of self-concept on the gender identity gendered brand relationship is then provided. Literature asserting the proposed differences between the two product category types; as well as the two genders of the parent brands is provided thereafter. Lastly, theoretical justification of dissimilarities amid the manner in which the parent brand and the extension are evaluated is forwarded.

Chapter 4 of this dissertation forwards the methodological considerations of this work and the steps assumed in the implementation of this research. This methodology chapter presents the principal sampling, measurement, data collection, preparation and analysis considerations in consecutive sections. The chapter concludes with a thorough discussion of the various statistical analysis techniques employed to test the proposed relationships. These included: ANOVA, linear regression, t-tests, and Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR).

Chapter 5 is the penultimate chapter of this dissertation and reports the results of the descriptive and inferential statistical analyses directed to test the theorized relationships. This chapter forwards the results of the ANOVA, t-tests and Regression analyses conducted and thus comments on whether the proposed hypotheses were supported or rejected by the data. The findings presented in this chapter consequently address the objectives of this research endeavour.

Chapter 6 is the final chapter of this dissertation and expands on the results set forth in the preceding chapter. Particularly, the results of the inferential statistics conducted are applied to the objectives of this work. Thereafter, several recommendations ensuing from this research are forwarded which might inform both academics and practitioners. Lastly, this dissertation concludes with discussions that address the limitations of this research, as well as potential future avenues of research.

1.7 CONCLUSION

Gender identification behaviour has drastically altered within the last decade (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Consequently, there has been a noteworthy rise in the amount of androgynous individuals (Fugate & Philips, 2010). Gender identity congruity theory posits that individuals display more favourable behavioural outcomes towards brands that possess similar images or identities to their own (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Robbie & Neale, 2012). Further, contemporary consumers express their identities via their brand choices (Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013). Thus, there is a strong implication that introducing an androgynous brand could prove to be a lucrative strategy for marketers. However, the majority of brands still follow a dichotomous approach to brand gender: masculine versus feminine brands (Robbie & Neale, 2012).

Introducing androgynous brands through a brand extension could prove to be less risky and costly than introducing such a brand as a novel, stand-alone offering (Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). This study examines gender identity's potential influence in the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension. Further, it investigates the potential influence of three key factors on this central relationship: self-concept, product category and the gender of the parent brand.

This chapter specified the relevant theoretical foundations for this study and thus set the basis for the research that succeeds it. This chapter commenced by presenting and discussing the context within which this research endeavour was assumed. The research questions directing this study were specified thereafter, alongside its affiliated research objectives. Next, a succinct synopsis of the methodology was forwarded. The penultimate section of this introductory chapter then delineated the potential significance of this research within academic and industry contexts. The chapter then concluded by specifying the structure of the dissertation to come. The ensuing two theory chapters expand on, and comprehensively provide the theoretical foundations of this study that were briefly introduced in this introductory chapter.

CHAPTER 2

GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDERED PRODUCTS: A POSTMODERNIST VIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter served to briefly outline the key motivations for the proposed research questions and objectives, specifically exposing the study's academic and practical merit. Having outlined the relevance of this work, it is imperative to contextualise this study within the scope of prior works. Relevant theory and findings in extant literature are, therefore, presented and these will serve as a foundation upon which the rest of this study is based. The following two chapters, together, assume a funnel approach: broader topics are addressed in the first literature chapter and then the focus is narrowed in the second chapter. Accordingly, the specific manner in which constructs are interconnected; as well as the manner in which they are investigated is depicted in the ensuing chapter. Thus, the formal postulations that guide this work are also presented in the second literature review chapter.

This first literature review chapter, as mentioned above, serves to address broader terminologies and theories that underpin this study. Specifically, it explores: postmodernism, symbolism, gender identity, self-concept, brand image, gendered products and brands, and ultimately, brand extensions. This structure is now elaborated on.

This discussion initiates by elucidating the postmodern environment within which this work is contextualised. It then narrows the emphasis towards a specific behaviour displayed within this environment. Having delineated this act, it is necessary to expand both on the individual that performs it; as well as the stimuli employed by the individual to do so. Thus, aspects pertaining to the individual, namely: gender identity and self-concept are examined. Naturally then, elements of the stimuli are explored thereupon. Broader dimensions of the stimuli are addressed first, via a brief discussion of brand image, followed by a more focused examination of such stimuli through an exploration of gendered products, gendered brands and brand extensions. The contents of each of these sections are now briefly presented below.

The first section of this chapter therefore focuses on postmodernism: what, indeed, postmodernism constitutes as well as the manner(s) in which postmodern individuals function and what renders them relevant to this work. Particularly, the theory exposes a specific behaviour exhibited by postmodern individuals, namely continual identity fabrication. It addresses this behaviour via an examination of symbolism: the act of utilizing objects to assist in self-identity formation. Following this, the discussion

expands on individual identity, looking specifically at gender identity: what the concept entails and why numerous authors have asserted its pertinence within a consumption context. Another identity aspect is then explored, namely: self-concept. Relevant theory regarding self-concept is formally presented that serves to introduce as well as elucidate the concept and assert its relevance within this work. Having addressed aspects of identity thus, the discussion then shifts its focus towards the objects that these individuals employ to create their identities. Specifically, the discussion begins by addressing brand image broadly, and then narrows this focus, introducing and exploring gendered products and gendered brands. It presents findings in current literature regarding both of these, as well as argues why the examination of brand gender is more appropriate than investigating product gender. Lastly, brand extensions are introduced as a potentially less costly and less risky strategy to introduce new offerings, as compared to the introduction of new brands. Various types of brand extensions are introduced, the particular definition employed in this work is presented, successful and unsuccessful brand extensions are offered; and the potential advantages and disadvantages posed by brand extensions are presented.

Having delineated the contents of this chapter, the theory regarding each construct is now formally presented. Accordingly, the ensuing section addresses postmodernism, providing insight into what postmodernism entails, examining the trajectory from modernism to postmodernism and then exposing certain key consequences of postmodernism that render this work relevant.

2.2. POSTMODERNISM

Postmodernism began as a development in architecture, arts and literature and then flowed into numerous facets, confronting modernist assumptions of logical reasoning, “positivism, scientific rationality and capitalism” (Humayun, 2012: 2). Postmodernism, largely characterized by relativism, has seen consumers fixated with reconfiguring their personal identities through the employment of cultural resources (Gabriel & Lang, 1995; Gergen, 1991; Giddens, 1991, 1993; Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013; McCracken, 1988). Here, products are utilized to establish, alter and recreate themselves through the exhibition of acquired goods (Baudrillard, 1988; Belk, 1988). Postmodern consumers are not simply merging masculine and feminine characteristics to create new identities; rather the very definition of masculinity and femininity are being dynamically deconstructed and reconfigured to fashion novel, distinctive selves (Kacen, 2000). This pursuit of self-identity is a vital element of postmodern consumption and, as such, it is imperative that marketers comprehend the notion and subtleties of the self, the symbolic significance of items and the function brands perform (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998).

Having affirmed that postmodernism largely challenges modernist suppositions, it is necessary to expand on the trajectory from modernism to postmodernism. This is, consequently, outlined in the ensuing section below.

2.2.1 Modernism to Postmodernism

Bauman (2001) stated that postmodernity could be regarded as a reinstatement of what modernity deprived society of: a “re-enchantment” of life that modernity attempted to “disenchant”. Although there is a paucity of concrete definitions and distinctions for and amid modernism and postmodernism in the literature, there is a progressive tendency to comprehend postmodernism as a lucrative source of expansion and improvement (Wood, 1996). Further, postmodern society is largely regarded as a consumption-driven society that emerged as a response to a more conventional, modern society, with the noted distinction between these societies implicating significantly dissimilar consumption sequences and frameworks (Berner & Van Tonder, 2003). Where modernism was characterized by inflexible structure and constancy, postmodernism entails a variegated empathy and acceptance, accompanied by a favoured incongruity, diversity, sarcasm and twin-fold meaning and contradiction (Van Raaij, 1993).

Additionally, where modern society was regarded as a collaboration of social collections such as “socio-professional” groups and social class, postmodern society, comparatively, mirrors an interconnected system of societal micro-collections where individuals have common emotional connections, shared subcultures, and ideas regarding life (Cova, 1996). A single postmodern individual is typically a member of numerous tribes wherein he or she performs dissimilar roles and assumes particular masks and, consequently, is beyond modern definition and (modern) sociological categorization (Cova, 1996). Further, being a member of these tribes is now regarded as being far more essential and meaningful to these individuals than being a member of a particular modern social class or division (Cova, 1996). As such, the individual surpasses definition whereby previous modern static classification is replaced by an adaptable, ever-changing standing within and amidst numerous postmodern tribes (Cova, 1996).

In fact, this emergence of a consumption culture has destroyed the male-female dichotomy and rendered all individuals: consumers (Kacen, 2000). Moreover, postmodern individuals’ consumption selections arise not purely from the functional capabilities of products, but, additionally, from their symbolic significance (Bourdieu, 1994; Gabriel & Lang, 1995; Kim & Hyun, 2013; Parker, 2009). This symbolic significance functions in two ways: externally in the creation of the social environment, and inwardly in the establishment of self-identity (Elliot, 1997). This establishment of self-identity, as noted previously, is a fundamental aspect of postmodern consumption, and as such a vital aspect of this work. Consequently, it is now addressed.

2.2.2 Postmodern Contexts and Identity Fabrication

Most researchers agree that one of the fundamental characteristics of postmodern consumers classifies them as identity constructors (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998; Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013). Postmodernism theorizes the self as something an individual dynamically constructs, partly via consumption (Gabriel & Lang, 1995; Giddens, 1993), with individuals perceiving themselves in alignment with the perceived potential selves (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). The fabrication of identities is extremely varied; even opposing (Decrop, 2008; Firat, Sherry & Vankatech, 1994), developed in order to satisfy varied encounters (Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013), and numerous consumption experiences (Firat *et al.*, 1994). These consumption experiences, as well as additional marketing consequences of postmodernism, are now expanded on.

2.2.3 Marketing and Postmodernism

Although postmodernism emerged as a leading social concept approximately thirty years ago (Christensen, Torp & Firat, 2005), the marketing realm only distinctly identified it as a vital elucidatory element of the existing social environment in the 1990's (López-Bonilla & López-Bonilla, 2009). Despite this, postmodernism has numerous significant consequences for marketing, consumer examination and strategy (Berner & Van Tonder, 2003; Van Raaij, 1993).

The emergence of postmodernism was regarded as a fresh conceptual structure that would facilitate a superior comprehension of existing societal transformation, incorporating both consumption and marketing (Firat, Dholakia & Vankatesh, 1995; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1992). In fact, the merits of postmodernism as compared to modernism have emerged as a topic in high profile marketing campaigns (Humayun, 2012). Marketing, in a postmodern context, may assign significance to existence via consumption in societies (Van Raaij, 1993). Further, postmodern marketing communications encourage individuals to shift images, performing a variety of roles ranging from a caring partner to an effective manager (Van Raaij, 1993). Consequently, these individuals house numerous self-images that are modified according to the situation encountered (Van Raaij, 1993).

Postmodernism cogitates modalities via which people reason and behave as consumers in present-day societies (Holt, 1997; Thompson, 2002). Postmodern research introduced paradigms that enabled the capture of attributes of postmodern consumption performances (Addis & Podesta, 2005), as well as the comprehension of customer behaviour (Cova & Cova, 2001). Postmodernism's attractiveness to researchers lies in its interdisciplinary essence that facilitates a broader and deeper perception of consumers through the traversing of theoretical parameters (Miles, 1999).

Marketing is progressively becoming a consumer-assimilated process with consumers

each becoming practised in the subject (Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013). This “deprofessionalization” will, likely, benefit consumers (Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013). Integrated marketing enables postmodern consumers to envision and fabricate their identities as a way to encounter a meaningful and profound experience of their life (Firat & Dholakia, 2006). Authors have stressed that marketing needs to question its understanding and explanations pertaining to both consumers and consumption (Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013); as well as begin to be understood as an initiator for individuals, and not a final product provider (Firat *et al.*, 1995). As such, products would never be conceptualized as finished items and consumption would be rendered an infinite process of transformation, beginning at the time of purchase (Firat & Dholakia, 2006). In fact, utilitarian dissimilarities amid products and services are eroding, with individuals conducting purchase resolutions relative to product image (Cova, 1996). Images are reinforced via advertisements that assign meaning to products and are, in fact, so effective that any meaning can be conferred to any product (Cova, 1996). As such, advertising in a postmodern context is a manner of transferring meaning from a culturally comprised environment to the good (Cova, 1996). Further, in this context the consumer ceases to be an inert objective of image marketing and, rather, assumes a dynamic role as a producer of meaning (Cova, 1996). Lastly, postmodernity has witnessed the emergence of extreme individualism, wherein individuals strive to portray their uniqueness via their purchasing activities (Cova, 1996).

Various consequences of postmodernism were presented above. Of particular relevance with respect to this work, however, two key outcomes must be reiterated. Specifically, individuals persistently reconfigure their identities via the employment of brands and products (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Hogg *et al.*, 2000). Furthermore, a convergence of sex roles and a noteworthy rise in the amount of androgynous individuals has been observed (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Kliamenakis, 2011). Having outlined the context wherein this study takes place, it is necessary to expand on both of these two aspects. Accordingly, the section that follows addresses individuals’ employment of brands and products. Individuals’ identity is expanded on thereafter.

2.3 SYMBOLISM

The idea that brands transfer information that extends past their functional product utility is a vital tenet of brand research (Kim & Hyun, 2013; Parker, 2009). Levy (1959) is frequently credited as having commenced this debate, stating that consumers are not functionally directed, and that consumer behaviour is notably influenced by “symbols” that are employed to recognize commodities, predominantly the image conveyed by products and brands. Items, then, possess symbolic significance where an individual concentrates on significances that exceed an item’s tangible traits (Levy, 1959). Literature stemming from various disciplines, including psychology, anthropology and consumer behaviour claim that this arises as a result of an individual’s employment of symbolic brand meaning for personal and social

expression (Belk, 1988; McCracken, 1986; Zinkham & Hong, 1991). In fact, even large fast-moving-consumer-good (or FMCG) companies such as Proctor & Gamble have recently stated that their marketing campaigns have migrated away from assuming a functional focus and now adopt campaigns that stress emotional, or symbolic, connections (O'Reilly, 2012).

Within the consumer behaviour realm, individuals employ possessions and objects (such as products and brands) as symbolic communication tools in an attempt to communicate a suitable image and to receive positive responses (Baumgartner, 2002; Belk, 1988; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). As such, self-enhancement takes place through links with objects that have appropriate social significance and that elicit positive responses from important references (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Parker, 2009). Numerous authors have proposed that in order for consumption goods and brands to serve as communication tools or signs, significances should be publically shared and constantly fashioned and reproduced throughout social dealings (Dittmar, 1992). However, symbolism has also been linked to private encounters (and emotional principles), where individuals form attachments to goods that presented no apparent worth to other individuals (Banister & Hogg, 2003).

The recent understanding that individuals fashion identities through the employment of brands, images and market selections has exercised a powerful initial impact with repercussions for marketers and consumer researchers (Wu *et al.*, 2013). Consumption in society has been illustrated, through marketing communications, as a wealth of individual liberation, selection and gratification (Wu *et al.*, 2013). Consequently, the terms residents and consumer become virtually substitutable identity depictions (Wu *et al.*, 2013).

The influence of symbolic meaning of a product is based on the connection between an individual's self-image and the product symbol (a subjective meaning allocated to a product) (Zinkhan & Hong, 1991). If the symbol of the product does not closely relate to the individual's image, it may have little effect on purchasing behaviour (Zinkhan & Hong, 1991). The influence of product symbolism is, therefore, dependent on the interrelationship between a product's perceived image and the consumer's self-image (Zinkhan & Hong, 1991). Individuals assume symbols they regard as being in alignment with their self-image, exhibiting self-resemblances, what they stand for, and the sorts of social connections they desire to establish (Eastman, Goldsmith & Flynn, 1999). Accordingly, symbolic purchasing behaviour, or brand symbolism, should be examined within the framework of the consumer's self-concept, which signifies the manner in which an individual perceives him or her self (Kleine *et al.*, 1995; Richins, 1994; Zinkhan & Hong, 1991). The notion implies that elements of specific brands may represent imperative characteristics of an individual, thus reinforcing their own self-concept by encircling themselves with objects that represent or embody their own self-concept (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). As such, through the consumption of goods as symbols (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967), an

individual's self-concept is gathered from objects (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). Additionally, an individual can express their own masculinity or femininity through a brand (McCracken, 1993); as well as utilize brands to discern who they are (Seabrook, 1999).

Symbolic consumption also aids individuals in defining themselves in society and to simplify their self-conversions as well as realise a feeling of permanency (Belk, 1988). The sum of intentional consumption holds symbolic significance: where the individual possesses consumption options, they will consume objects that possess specific personal or communal symbolic significance (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). A bulk of the literature proposes that individuals are the items they possess as these items are regarded as significant elements of their extended selves (Belk, 1988). In fact, product possession and utilization can assist in self-definition, identity expression (Mittal, 2006) and link individuals to others (Eckhardt, 2000).

The significances of items, however, are not always easily discernable or straightforward (Holt, 2002). Producers and managers do not always manage these meanings since individuals can imbue items and brands with favourable or unfavourable significances and connotations (Sirgy *et al.*, 1997). Consequently, these items can serve as signs of originality and distinctiveness (Kleine *et al.*, 1995), independence and social difference (Gronow, 1997), as well as signals of association and social connection (Banister & Hogg, 2003). These motivations are all associated with upholding and augmenting self-esteem (Banister & Hogg, 2003).

Earlier studies noted the necessity of ascertaining a comprehensive grasp of the relationship amid individuals and status brands, examining their attained standing arising from the exhibition of their chosen brands (O'Cass & Frost, 2002). Consequently, certain authors (e.g. Grotts & Johnson, 2013: 284) concluded that individuals acquire specific luxury items as a means to both feel and display self-accomplishment, referring to this "status consumption as symbolic completion".

It is via the consumption of symbolic significance, especially via the utilization of advertising as a cultural product or service, that the consumer is afforded the prospect of fabricating, upholding and conveying identity and social significances (Elliott, 1997). In fact, advertising is acknowledged as being a fundamental and powerful source of symbolic meaning (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). As a component of a cultural structure, advertising assists in plotting all elements of an individual's reality (Ritson & Elliott, 1995); and also, all elements of the individual's life are additionally guides to plot out advertising imagination (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). As such, advertising not only assists in constructing, altering and converting cultural significances for individuals (Lannon & Cooper, 1983): it also signifies cultural significances acquired from the individual's perspective and imbued into the marketed product (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). This interaction between the two evokes a cyclical movement of symbolic significances procured from culture and

relocated into the semiotic environment of advertising, consequently deciphered and employed by individuals to create inwardly their self-concept and outwardly their social environment (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). Consequently, advertising is a manner to allocate or fashion significances into culture; as well as a cultural product (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998).

The above section addressed symbolism: the process of employing brands and products to formulate and communicate self-identity. It is necessary to expand firstly on this concept of identity; and then on the brands and products, themselves, which have been argued to possess an identity too.

2.4 GENDER IDENTITY

Gender identity is an amalgamation of an individual's physiological gender characteristics, social gender roles and gender orientations (Kacen, 2000; Ye & Robertson, 2012); or the degree to which a person identifies with masculine or feminine personality characteristics (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Otherwise stated, it is a psychological construct that expresses the degree of masculinity and femininity that an individual internalizes into their notion of self (Fischer & Arnold, 1994). Gender identity is categorized into four segments according to an individual's respective levels of masculinity and femininity. These include: masculine gender identity (high levels of masculinity and low levels of femininity), feminine gender identity (high levels of femininity and low levels of masculinity), androgynous gender identity (high levels of both masculinity and femininity) and undifferentiated gender identity (low levels of masculinity and femininity) (Bem, 1974).

Gender identities, then, as personal identities, are personal creations (Kacen, 2000), with decades of research in both the marketing and psychology (Woolfolk, 1995) realms upholding the idea that consumers create gender identities both for themselves and for products, assisted to an extent by gender images projected through the mass media (Connell, 1987, 1990; Fowles, 1996; Fugate & Philips, 2010). Furthermore, numerous other authors have confirmed that individuals employ brands and items to fabricate and express their self-identities (Belk, 1988; Fournier, 1998). While initial studies concentrated on general conceptual matters concerning individuals and their notion of self, more current research assumes a more focused perspective, examining the relationship amid identity matters and purchase behaviour in an effort to comprehend the influence of particular self-linked motives as well as other matters of self-identity and their influence on consumption conduct (Escalas, 2013). Researchers have concentrated on particular relationships amid self-identity-linked-motives and consumer conduct, examining factors including integration, uniqueness, self-confirmation and self-establishment (Escalas, 2013). In keeping with these more contemporary studies, this study examines two identity aspects, namely gender identity and self-concept (introduced in the ensuing section) and their potential

relationship with brand extension evaluation in an endeavour to provide insight into these self-linked intentions and consumption behaviour.

Validation, concerning the examination of brand identity, is observable in both managerial and theoretical spheres (Azar, 2013). Identity matters have emerged, and will endure, as a fundamental domain of investigation (Ahuvia, 2005). An individual's gender identity is a pivotal aspect of their social identity (Connell, 1987, 1990) which individuals alter via their engagement with other people and through their perceived social position in reference to others (Blumer, 1969; Stone, 1962). An individual's notion of gender is thus an inseparable synthesis of personal and cultural influence, fashioned through both emotional and subconscious fantasy (Chodorow, 1996). Gender is, therefore, not a fixed quality but rather a fluid feature that transforms in diverse contexts and times (Butler, 1990). Culturally endorsed masculinity is dominating, unemotional and workplace oriented; while femininity, in contrast, is nurturing, empathetic, compliant and connected to the home and bedroom (Connell, 1987). An individual possessing both masculine and feminine characteristics is regarded as androgynous (Fugate & Philips, 2010).

Gender identity has been found to affect an individual's level of cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, product involvement, purchase intent and males' responses to advertisements (Fischer & Arnold, 1994; Martin & Gnoth, 2009; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012). In a significant amount of these studies, gender identity affected variables such as purchase intent, product involvement, and many others; while biological sex did not (Robbie & Neale, 2012). The impact of identity on consumer action is widely acknowledged throughout various domains of literature, with a particular rise in marketing-related studies observed recently (Reed *et al.*, 2012).

Marketing literature is saturated with studies that employ biological sex as the exclusive determinant of gender-related behaviour. However, this dichotomized approach disregards imperative dissimilarities amidst sex and gender which results in misrepresentations of complicated gender-associated marketing phenomena (Hirschman, 1993; Palan, 2001; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Specifically, such an approach overlooks the psychological (gender) traits of masculinity and femininity (Feiereisen, Broderick & Douglas, 2009), and overlooks alternative psychological orientations that may exist within one single gender (Fischer & Arnold, 1994). In fact, recent literature has concluded that it would be logical fallacy to suppose that sex, itself, can satisfactorily evaluate all gender related phenomena (Fischer & Arnold, 1994; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Many recent studies have concluded that gender identity is both a better predictor of consumer behaviour (Costa *et al.*, 2001; Jaffe 1991, 1994; Robbie & Neale 2012) as well as a more appropriate segmentation variable than biological sex (Costa *et al.*, 2001; Robbie & Neale, 2012). Gender identity has been found to affect an individual's cognitive and affective loyalty, as well as purchase intent, while biological sex did not (Robbie & Neale

2012). Authors have claimed that an individual's gender identity can provide a more advanced instrument for examining the influence gender exerts on consumer action (Worth *et al.*, 1992). Further, they have stated that the manners in which gender is initiated and rendered prominent in dissimilar environments requires additional exploration (Moore, 2004; Palan, 2001 as cited by Patterson & Hogg, 2004). Practically, managers have begun imbuing non sex-specific products and brands with identities in an effort to attract certain consumers (Azar, 2013). This is observable in numerous brands, one being Coca-Cola imbuing Coke Zero with a masculine identity (Azar, 2013). Pepsi Co has done the same with Pepsi Max (Azar, 2013).

Although advertisers typically tailor their functioning according to whether they intend to appeal to males or females (i.e reacting to sex-founded dissimilarities), literature asserts that individuals' reactions vary according to psychological dissimilarities founded on "self-schemas of gender identity" (Hogg & Garrow, 2003: 171). It is imperative, then, to note that the conventional, dichotomized manner in which gender has been conceptualized is fundamentally flawed within a contemporary environment; and as such, advertisers must comprehend that gender factions are not isomorphic with biological sex (Hogg & Garrow, 2003; Patterson & Hogg, 2004; Ye & Robertson, 2012). In fact, within the postmodern culture of today, the estrangement of gender from sex is especially evident (Palan, 2001).

Gender identity research has been investigated in numerous tenets of the consumption domain: products and brands, services - even food – with recent studies concluding that gendered identities are significantly connected to food consumption (Turner, Ferguson, Craig, Jeffries & Beaton, 2013). Masculine identity was noted as being upheld and manoeuvred through the food consumed (Turner *et al.*, 2013). Feminine identities, conversely, were found to be fashioned through the food *not* consumed, with this absence often eliciting a potentially destructive relationship with the consumption of food (Turner *et al.*, 2013). Further, the sort of food a person consumes has constantly been linked to their masculinity or femininity (Vartanian, Herman & Polivy, 2007), with the consumption of meat being traditionally associated with masculinity and linked to characteristics like strength, power and virility (Burkle, 2009); and the consumption of sweet food types typically being regarded as being feminine (Lupton, 1996).

Given the repeated affirmation that gender identity dictates consumption behaviour (Fischer & Arnold, 1994; Martin & Gnoth, 2009; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012), as well as it being a superior explanatory variable than biological sex, gender identity and its potential influence on brand evaluation comprises the central relationship under investigation in this dissertation. Another fundamental aspect of the self, namely self-image (or self-concept) is now addressed.

2.5 SELF-IMAGE AND SELF-CONCEPT

Examining an individual's self-concept and its association and interaction with symbolic consumption is pertinent for marketers aiming to comprehend the nature of postmodern consumer behaviour (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). Self-image, in its most essential form, alludes to the manner in which a person perceives himself or herself to be as an individual (Parker, 2009). Consequently, it is referred to as a self-perception (Graeff, 1996; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). Self-image is a multidimensional opinion of one's self that varies according to the situation encountered or social function performed (Aaker, 1999; Gould, 1991; Graeff, 1996; Sirgy, 1982, 1986; Sutherland *et al.*, 2004; Zinkham & Hong, 1991). It consists of two fundamental facets, namely: the "real" or "actual-self" and the "ideal-self" (Aaker, 1999; Abel *et al.*, 2013; Gould, 1991; Graeff, 1996; Sirgy, 1982, 1986; Sutherland *et al.*, 2004; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). The real or actual self is an individual's idea of the self as experienced in the present (Abel *et al.*, 2013; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Rogers, 1959; Sirgy, 1982). The ideal self is an individual's perception of the self as an imaginary ideal: the image of themselves as they desire to be (Abel *et al.*, 2013; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Rogers, 1959; Sirgy, 1982). Individuals possess an assortment of actual and ideal or potential selves (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998), with the manner in which they consider themselves to be as people affecting their actions in a profound manner (Parker, 2005).

Self-image, as a construct, is essential to the field of social psychology and a vital variable in comprehending not only consumer behaviour (Parker, 2005; Quester *et al.*, 2000), but broad-scale human behaviour as well (Parker, 2005, 2009). Additionally, it is a fundamental driving factor of consumption (Parker, 2009) and affects purchase and brand decisions (Belk, 1988; Plummer, 2000; Sirgy, 1982; Zinkham & Hong, 1991), as well as brand preferences (Ebrahim, 2011; Rhee & Johnson, 2012). Through the acquisition and utilization of products, individuals can uphold and augment their self-image (Hosany & Martin, 2012).

Self-image is interchangeably recognized as self-concept in the literature (Green, Maheshwari & Rao, 1969; Quester *et al.*, 2000). Various definitions exist that attempt to explain self-concept (Abel *et al.*, 2013), but authors are in agreement that it aids people in defining themselves as distinctive objects or subjects (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). James (1980), typically regarded as the founding figure of self-concept theory, refers to an individual's self-concept as the sum of everything that he may refer to as his own, which includes not only his body and physic powers, but also his possessions. This notion was subsequently upheld (Belk, 1988). Implicit in the aforementioned definition, then, is that an individual's self surpasses the personal presence to encompass belongings and other external components (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012).

Targeting an individual's self-concept has been noted as being a fundamental tenet of both marketing and advertising with respect to brand strategies (Xue, 2008). Self-concept's relevance in the consumer behaviour discipline is centered on the fact that numerous purchases are directly affected by the image consumers have of themselves (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1987). This outlook has been repeatedly reinforced (Feinberg, Mataro & Burroughs, 1992; Heath & Scott, 1998; Schwer & Daneshvary, 1995; Sirgy & Ericksen, 1992). The marketing-associated consequences of self-concept theory manifest from the significance that a person attaches to their self-concept, and the extent to which an individual will make an effort to maintain this "image" of themselves (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). Rogers (1959) postulated that a person is driven by an essential actualizing inclination that operates in such a way as to cultivate all capabilities in manners that uphold and augment their self-image. Otherwise stated, consumer attitudes and behaviours can be lead towards defending and improving one's self-concept (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). In fact, a significant body of research demonstrates that the self-concept is the foundation for all driven action (Parker, 2005).

The self signifies an entirety that transforms into a chief significance that reality rotates about, is preserved and, where achievable, is to be transformed into something further treasured (Parker, 2005). As a person's general self-assessment affects his actions, consequently, an extremely cherished self will accompany more methodical and constant action (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). Authors postulate that people do not possess self-discernments at birth. Rather, an individual's self-image evolves as they grow via social occurrences and interpersonal experiences (Ziegler & Hjelle, 1992 as cited by Parker, 2005). A person establishes their self-image discernments mainly via the responses they receive from important references (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). As a result of self-improvement and protection being contingent on the responses from these noteworthy references, the person aims to manage his actions so as to receive favourable responses from them (Sirgy, 1982). Therefore, in an effort to obtain the correct construal of their social conduct, people endeavour to govern their surroundings and clothes (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). Consumers employ products and brands as symbolic exhibition tools in an attempt to convey a certain image and receive positive reactions (Belk, 1988; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). Self-improvement, therefore, takes places via connections with items that possess suitable social significance and that elicit positive responses from noteworthy references (Parker, 2005). The items, themselves, may possess an array of significances, as the establishment of significance is neither one-directional nor predetermined as each consumer may attribute dissimilar significances to a certain brand or product (Ritson, Elliott & Eccles, 1996).

Individuals behave in a manner that is governed by their motivation to realize their ambitions, or to evade dangers (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Banister and Hogg (2004) cite two objectives as being essential to both self-concept and image congruence theories (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967): self-esteem and self-consistency (Rosenburg,

1979). While self-esteem incentivizes individuals to pursue encounters that augment or uphold their self-concept, self-consistency is the incentive to perform in a manner that is in agreement with an individual's self perception (Banister & Hogg, 2004). In an effort to examine individuals' employment of approach or evasion tactics in identity formation, Banister and Hogg (2004) concluded that individuals' motivations were adaptable, with the drive of self-esteem inspiring or discouraging them from consuming particular products and brands.

This chapter provided theoretical assertion that postmodern individuals are constantly formulating self-identities. In order to provide a better understanding of self-identity, gender identity and self-concept were discussed. The focus of this chapter now shifts slightly, towards the objects that these postmodern individuals employ to assist in the formation and communication of their identity. In this regard, the discussion now addresses the broad concept of brand image, before narrowing this focus and examining gendered brand image.

2.6 BRAND IMAGE

As stated previously, utilitarian dissimilarities amid products and services are eroding, with individuals conducting purchase resolutions relative to product or brand image (Cova, 1996). As such, it is vital that marketers understand brand image and the influence that it may exert on consumer behaviour.

Brand image inhabits an associative memory network that is vital to consumer decision-making and can deliver biased brand recall and assessment, eventually affecting brand equity (Holden, 1992). Following the formal presentation of the concept in the 1950's, it has become routine in consumer behaviour research (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). In fact, it has been noted as being a fundamental driving factor of consumption (Parker, 2009). Despite this, concrete definition of the term is difficult to ascertain in the literature, and, due to its abstract nature, brand image can possess numerous significances and definitions in alignment with various perspectives (Martinez & Pina, 2003), and at different times (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). For example: Kotler (2000) classified brand image as the group of perceptions an individual possesses regarding a specific brand; while Danes, Hess, Story and York (2010: 313) employed brand image to denote "brand, store, corporate or product image". Definitions of the concept can, however, typically be grouped into one of five categories (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). These include: blanket definitions, as well as definitions that stress symbolism, meaning or message, personification and cognitive or psychological dimensions (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). The foremost, widely acknowledged definition refers to brand image as an individual's discernment of a brand, and what manifests in the consumer's thoughts when the brand is cited (Keller, 1993). This discernment also affects the brand's positioning (Hu, Liu, Wang & Yang, 2012), which, itself, is regarded as a fundamental dimension of brand equity (Azar,

2013). This proposition has been upheld in both theoretical and practical spheres (Azar, 2013), and is thus the one adopted in this work.

Three fundamental dimensions of brand image have been stressed: favourability, strength and distinctiveness of brand linkages (Keller, 1993). These linkages, or associations, manifest in one of these groups: product features, product advantages and attitudes regarding the brand (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) states that the intention of all companies should be to establish positive connections with a brand, which forms a favourable brand image.

Both academics and practitioners have extensively considered brand image management (Hu *et al.*, 2012). Marketing tools can be employed to establish brand image (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). These can include: brand name and logo, advertisements and communications, packaging and labelling, pricing, the particular target market, and employers of the brand or product (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). Prior studies propose that individuals arrange a collection of features and formulate an image connection to the brand throughout both functional and symbolic elements (Park, Jaworski & MacInnis, 1986; Sirgy & Samli, 1985). These images are matched against numerous reference points, including: social image, ideal social image, product category image and affect consumers' responses to particular brands (Sirgy, Johar, Samli & Claiborne, 1991; Sirgy & Su, 2000).

While some authors have proposed that brand image and brand identity are utilized interchangeably (Ind, 1990), other authors have stated that the terms are unique notions but associated in that both are vital components of powerful brands (Nandan, 2005). Srivastava (2011) notes that both, regardless, are the result of communication. Brand identity consists of a group of resources and liabilities connected to both the brand name and symbol that either augments or diminishes the value a product or service offers (Aaker, 1996). Martinez and Pina (2003) acknowledge that interactions are present amid extension approaches and brand identity. In fact, recurring validation concerning the examination of brand identity is observable in both managerial and theoretical spheres (Azar, 2013).

Unfortunately, little focus has been placed on brand image (Parker, 2009). Despite this, it remains a fundamental tenet of self-congruity (Parker, 2009) and consumer behaviour research (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990) and, as such, is a vital concept in this work.

A fundamental dimension of brand image comprises of gender (i.e. gendered image), typically arising as a result of animism: the act of ascribing human traits to inanimate objects (Romaniuk & Ehrenburg, 2012). This assigning of human characteristics to brands has been identified as a manner of creating enduring relationships with consumers whom have been found to possess an inherent necessity to 'humanize' objects prior to engaging with them (Romaniuk & Ehrenburg, 2012). In fact, the

majority of brands attempt to create or reinforce strong gender connotations via advertising efforts, narratives and packaging (Veg & Nyeck, 2007). Thus, having introduced the notion of brand image and brand identity in a general sense, it is necessary to focus this discussion on a specific aspect of brand identity that forms a central tenet of this work, namely: gendered brand and product image.

The forthcoming section introduces the notion of gendered consumption, addresses both gendered products and gendered brands and motivates the examination of gendered brands (rather than gendered products) in this work.

2.7 GENDERED PRODUCTS AND GENDERED BRANDS

Decades of research in both the marketing and psychology (Woolfolk, 1995) realms uphold the idea that consumers create gender identities both for themselves and for products, assisted, to an extent, by gender images projected through the mass media (Fugate & Philips, 2010). Otherwise stated, consumption has always been gendered, with individuals depending on gendered products and brands as mechanisms to represent their gender identities (Avery, 2012). Consequently, gender is a fundamental investigative categorization in marketing and consumer behaviour research (Patterson & Hogg, 2004). Employing Bem's (1974) gender schema theory, many researchers have repeatedly confirmed that for the majority of products, products, like individuals, possess gender (Iyer & Debevec, 1986; Milner, Speece & Anderson, 1990; Milner & Fodness, 1996). In fact, even services have been found to possess a gender (Stern, Gould & Tewari, 1993). These gendered products are now discussed, followed by gendered brands.

2.7.1 Gendered Products

Early literature assumed product gender to be one-dimensional (Aiken, 1963; Fry, 1971; Morris & Cundiff, 1971; Vitz & Johnson, 1965). However, following the conceptualization of gender identity as a two-dimensional concept (Bem, 1974), researchers challenged this notion. Consequently, many studies concluded that the concept of product gender could be expanded, such that androgynous (high co-levels of masculinity and femininity) and undifferentiated (low levels of masculinity and femininity) product genders also exist (Allison, Golden, Mullet & Coogan, 1979). However, many authors agree that product gender is chiefly derived from the opinion of the sex of the typical user (Allison *et al.*, 1979; Iyer & Debevec, 1986, 1989) or spokesperson of the product (Iyer & Debevec, 1986, 1989). As a result, product gender perception is more often derived as a result of the perception of the sex of the average user, and not according to an individual's gender identity (Kliamenkis, 2011). Consequently, product gender possesses limited explanatory power with respect to consumer behaviour. Its examination is therefore not undertaken within the scope of this work. Rather, gendered brands are employed.

2.7.2 Gendered Brands

Alreck (1994) noted that while products can, indeed, be gendered; the process often necessitates substantial investments that involve the alteration of production processes. Certain companies may either not possess or desire to invest so substantially. Conversely, the gendering of a brand typically only necessitates negligible changes in the product offering and can ordinarily be realised entirely via an alteration of advertising, packaging and sales promotion (Alreck, 1994). In fact, recent studies have shown that brand gender perceptions can be created or changed by comparatively very subtle techniques that include: font type, brand name, colour and logo cues and spokesperson employed (Grohmann, 2014; Guevremont & Grohmann, 2015). Furthermore, gendering a brand is an effective means of differentiating an offering, especially when close substitutes may exist within the market (Alreck, 1994). Additionally, favourable attitudes are more easily induced with respect to brand gender than product gender: individuals typically prefer brands with a gendered image that is congruent to their own but display differing, frequently conflicting responses with respect to gendered product image (Bakker, 2014). Moreover, while gendered perceptions of products have been extensively examined, the gendered perceptions of brands remain under-examined (Kliamenakis, 2011; Ulrich, Tissier-Desbordes & Dubois, 2011). Furthermore, despite the deteriorating dichotomization of men and women in society, brand gendering prevails as one of the most commonly employed strategies to differentiate a brand and appeal to target audiences (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Additionally, literature asserts that positioning a brand in terms of gender results in positive consumer response (Grohmann, 2014). Lastly, authors have argued that it is significantly more appropriate to investigate the influence of gender identity on consumption at the brand level, and not the product level, given the former's ability to be imbued with both instrumental and expressive characteristics (Kliamenakis, 2011). As a result of these reasons, this study investigates gendered brands rather than gendered products.

Grohmann (2009) described brand gender as the group of human personality characteristics linked to masculinity and femininity appropriate and suited to brands. Furthermore, Grohmann (2009) developed a scale to assess the perceived gendered brand personality (or image) of a brand, noting that a brand, like a human, could be categorized as being masculine, feminine, androgynous or undifferentiated. Azar (2013) emphasizes the anthropomorphism (citing Hanby, 1999) and humanisation (citing Aaker, 1999) of brands as the theoretical foundation of the gendered personality perspective of brands. Anthropomorphism can be defined as the inclination of individuals to assign human traits to non-human items such as brands (Aggrawal & McGill, 2007; Romaniuk & Ehrenburg, 2012). In fact, these notions underpin the symbolic notion that classifies brands as organic articles (Fournier, 1998), facilitated with features like gender, personality qualities and age (Aaker, 1997; Grohmann, 2009). Furthermore, this assigning of human characteristics to brands has been identified as a manner of creating enduring relationships with

consumers whom have been found to possess an inherent necessity to ‘humanize’ objects prior to engaging with them (Romaniuk & Ehrenburg, 2012).

Naturally, gendered perceptions of brands are expected to adhere to the same logic as products (Kliamenakis, 2011). However, dissimilar to products, brands can be imbued with personality characteristics, very similar to humans (Aaker, 1997; Grohmann, 2009). Additionally, the two-dimensional configuration of brand gender enables the presence of androgynous brands (brands with a high co-presence of masculine and feminine traits) (Kliamenakis, 2011). This expansion of brand gender accentuates the fact that brand personality signifies human personality characteristics related to brands, and not simple perceptions of the characteristic user or spokesperson (as is the case with product gender)(Grohman, 2009). Lastly, Sourabh Mishra, chief strategy officer of ‘Saatchi & Saatchi’, noted that when attempting to outline a brand’s gender identity, what is acceptable in a certain period would not necessarily be acceptable at a future time and thus an examination of brand identity must be frequently conducted (Bapna, 2012).

2.7.2.1 Androgynous Brands

As noted above, brands can be gendered (Alreck, 1994; Grohmann, 2009). Furthermore, this gendered classification of brands mirrors that of gender identity in that gendered brand image can be classified as being masculine, feminine, androgynous (high co-presence of masculinity and femininity) and undifferentiated (low levels of masculinity and femininity)(Grohmann, 2009). Given that individuals are more likely than ever to identify as being androgynous (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Kliamenakis, 2011) and that individuals employ brands to express their identities (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Hogg *et al.*, 2000), there is a strong implication that androgynous brands could realize much success. Authors have also acknowledged that there is a paucity of research that examines androgynous brands and consumer response and that such research is critical (Chang & Tung, 2015). In fact, certain authors propose that introducing an androgynous brand is crucial to ensure long-term success (Fugate & Philips, 2010). Given these four factors, an androgynous gendered brand is examined in this study. An attractive manner of introducing such a brand is via a brand extension.

2.7.3 Brand Extension

Brand extension involves the introduction of either similar or dissimilar products into comparable (Desai & Keller, 2002; Keller 2008; Viot, 2011; Völckner & Sattler, 2006) or diverse markets, utilizing a reputable brand name (Gierl & Huettl, 2011; Panda, 2006; Viot, 2011), termed the parent brand (Thompson & Strutton, 2012; Völckner & Sattler, 2006). Introducing a new brand via a brand extension, rather than as a stand-alone new brand, enables the minimization of both costs and risk (Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). The concept of brand extension is expanded on in the

forthcoming chapter. However, it is necessary to introduce the notion of an androgynous brand extension prior to this.

2.7.3.1 Androgynous Brand Extension

Given the above discussion on gendered brands, an androgynous brand *extension* would therefore be a brand that has a high co-presence of both masculinity and femininity (Grohmann, 2009), introduced from an existing parent brand. Given that the majority of brands assume a dichotomous gendered brand approach, namely masculine versus feminine brands, and that this prevails as one of the most commonly employed strategies to differentiate a brand and appeal to target audiences (Robbie & Neale, 2012), it is likely that an androgynous brand extension would be introduced from a masculine or feminine parent brand. Therefore, this study examines an androgynous brand extension that has been introduced from both a masculine parent brand, as well one that has been introduced from a feminine parent brand.

Literature addressing brand extension and brand extension evaluation is presented in the first section of the ensuing chapter. Prior to this, however, this chapter concludes with a section that summarizes the contents presented herein.

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter addressed the relevant findings and theories regarding the broader concepts that underpin this study and constitutes the first literature review chapter. Specifically, it addressed: postmodernism, symbolism, brand image, gendered products and brands, androgynous brands and briefly introduced brand extensions. A summary of the trajectory that this chapter assumed via these sections is now provided.

This chapter initiated by contextualising this work via a discussion regarding postmodernism. Within this section, two key consequences of postmodernism were stressed, namely: the persistent creation of self-identity of consumers; as well as a notable increase in the amount of androgynous individuals. The fabrication of these self-identities is facilitated, largely, via the employment of objects. Consumers employ products and brand to assist them in the formation and communication of their self-identity. This process is referred to as symbolism, which was addressed thereafter. The discussion then focused its attention on the individual, introducing the concepts of gender identity and self-concept. The former was delineated as being an individual's psychological gender and the latter as being an individual's perception of self (both of their actual self in the present as well as their idealized version of self). The focus then shifted towards the items that individuals employ to create and express their identities. Specifically, the discussion focussed on an aspect of these objects that typically motivates their employment: their brand image. This was addressed in a broad sense, followed by theory regarding gendered brand image and androgynous

brands. Finally, brand extensions were briefly introduced, as well as the notion of an androgynous brand extension.

Having provided the general context for this study, and in adhering to the funnel structure previously mentioned, the forthcoming chapter assumes a narrower emphasis. It presents the particular manner in which all of the constructs in this study are interconnected and sets forth the formal postulations that guided this research. Specifically, it addresses: brand extensions, brand extension evaluation, gender identity and self-concept *congruity*, as well as the final two constructs of this study, namely product category and gender of the parent brand.

CHAPTER 3

GENDER IDENTITY AND SELF-CONCEPT CONGRUITY IN BRAND EXTENSION EVALUATION: ANDROGYNOUS BRAND EXTENSIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter served to contextualise this work within the scope of prior studies. As such, it introduced key concepts that underpin this study and presented relevant findings regarding them present in extant literature. This second literature review chapter expands on certain concepts introduced previously as well as introduces the formal expectations that guide this work. In so doing, the manner in which the chief constructs of this work are interconnected and examined becomes apparent.

This chapter initiates with a discussion addressing brand extensions. Thereafter it addresses brand extension evaluation. Given that all relationships in this work are investigated within a brand extension evaluation outcome perspective, this placement signifies the construct's significance within this work. Moreover, since all relationships are investigated within this framework, hypotheses regarding this construct are presented within the context of other concepts. Thus, following the section regarding brand extensions, this second literature review chapter sets forth the various aspects comprising brand extension evaluation, as well as forwards relevant findings concerning them in extant literature. With these two first sections then constituting a cognitive foundation, the remainder of constructs follow. Particularly, theory regarding each construct is forwarded in such a manner as to motivate the postulated relationships concerning them that guide this work.

The leading section depicts brand extensions as a relatively more attractive manner of introducing a new brand, as compared to introducing a stand-alone new one. The section that follows, delineates brand extension evaluation as a construct comprising of six dimensions: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the brand extension, brand preference and purchase intent. The chapter then expands on the concept of gender identity introduced in the previous chapter. This is conducted via a discussion regarding gender identity congruity: the idea that individuals exhibit more favourable outcomes towards a brand they perceive to possess a similar identity or image as themselves. Thereafter, the notion of self-concept is furthered via a section addressing self-congruity: the theory that individuals exhibit favourable outcomes for a brand they perceive to be in alignment with their current perception of themselves, or their

idealised version of themselves. Following this, potential influencers of the central relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation are examined. Particularly, this work examines: product category type, the gender of the parent brand and an individual's self-concept as exerting possible influencing affects on this relationship. Throughout, as noted above, this chapter presents the formal hypotheses that guide this work and substantiates their formulation via an examination of findings in extant literature. It then concludes, summarizing key content presented in the chapter and indicates what content the ensuing chapter contains.

3.2 BRAND EXTENSIONS

Brand extension involves the introduction of either homogenous or dissimilar products into similar (Desai & Keller, 2002; Keller 2008; Viot, 2011; Völckner & Sattler, 2006) or dissimilar markets, employing a recognised brand name (Gierl & Huettl, 2011; Panda, 2006; Viot, 2011), described as the parent brand (Thompson & Strutton, 2012; Völckner & Sattler, 2006).

Citing the current economic standing and intense competition (Arslan & Altuna, 2010), authors have acknowledged the necessity of companies acquiring novel methods to further themselves (Doraiswamy, 2011; Frieden, 2013), and ascertain a competitive advantage (Arslan & Altuna, 2010).

Brand extensions have materialized as a widely employed strategy (Frieden, 2013; Gierl & Huettl, 2011; Srivastava & Sharma, 2013; Viot, 2011), enabling companies to expand portfolios and minimize risk, costs and possible failure linked to the launching of a new product (Martinez & Pina, 2003; Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). In fact, authors have stated that approximately 82 % of all new products launched, and 90 % of new packaged goods onto the global market, yearly, are brand extensions (Cordero, 2007; Ouruoff, Ozanian, Brown & Starr, 1992; Simms, 2005). Further, more than 90 % of new products introduced within the fast-moving-consumer-good (or FMCG) sector in South Africa in 2005 were extensions (Seyama, 2006). FMCG goods are repeatedly acquired, non-durable items that are promptly consumed and inexpensive (Dibb, Simkin, Pride & Ferrell, 2006), for example food and drinks (Leahy, 2011).

Brand extensions' relative attractiveness is based on two fundamental factors. Firstly, implementing a brand extension is comparatively inexpensive (Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Doust & Esfahlan, 2012; Voss & Gammoh, 2004) when compared to the launching of a new brand, where the price can easily surpass \$100 million (Kharmouch, Holmes & Ihlwan, 2001; Voss & Gammoh, 2004). Firms may either not possess this, or not desire to invest so heavily (Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Doust & Esfahlan, 2012). In fact, the cost of launching a new product onto the market, or expanding into new markets has risen significantly as a result of strong competition (Thompson & Strutton, 2012). Consequently, the success rate of these activities is

extremely low (Thompson & Strutton, 2012), pressing marketers to lessen this risk through the employment of established powerful and recognizable brand names for new products (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Secondly, it enables companies to leverage existing brand equity (Aaker, 1991; d'Astous *et al.*, 2007; Viot, 2011) and brand image (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Stegemann, 2006) and, as such, substantially reduces the risk (or high failure rates) associated with brand introduction (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Batra, Lenk & Wedel, 2010; Keller, 2003; Srivastava & Shocker, 1991; Völckner & Sattler, 2006), enabling companies to penetrate new markets more quickly; and often more effectively (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Pitta & Katsanis, 1995). It is, however, crucial that marketers and managers comprehend the various factors that influence consumers' evaluations of brand extensions (Estes, Gibbert, Guest & Mazursky, 2011; Monga & Gürhan-Canli, 2012; Völckner & Sattler, 2007).

The risk minimization that results from brand extension stems from marketers' theories that individuals transfer favourable attitudes created from brand associations (Keller, 1993) from the parent brand to the extended product (Boisvert, 2011; Viot, 2011). If favourable attitudes are effectively transferred, the likelihood of individuals accepting the new product increases (Knape & Rodestedt, 2013). In fact, the acceptance levels for brand extensions are significantly higher than for new products that employ new brand names (d'Astous *et al.*, 2007; Martinez & Pina, 2003; Viot, 2011). The brand equity of the existing brand augments the value of new products launched with the identical brand name (Knape & Rodestedt, 2013), with the achievement of the equity transferal contingent on the individual's opinion of the suitability of the extended product, often referred to as perceptual fit (see Park, Jun & Shocker, 1996; Thompson & Strutton, 2012).

Various authors distinguish between certain types of extensions. A brief explanation of these is now provided so as to make clear what each constitutes and which specific type of extension is utilized in this work. The ensuing section addresses four key types of extensions present in the literature, namely: brand extensions, line extensions, range extensions and cross-gender brand extensions.

3.2.1 Types of Brand Extensions

Authors define extensions in dissimilar and inconsistent manners (Ambler & Styles, 1997; Arslan & Altuna, 2010). As such, it is imperative to differentiate between these varying extension conceptions (Ambler & Styles, 1997). Certain authors describe a brand extension as the introduction of a new product within an existing product line; others refer to this as a line extension (Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Groucutt, 2005). Some authors refer to an extension as the employment of a brand name to enter new categories (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). The implementation of a new product into either a similar or novel category has been classified as a horizontal extension (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). In certain studies, vertical extension indicates the launch of an extension in an existing category at a dissimilar quality or price (Arslan & Altuna,

2010), typically appealing to markets either above or below their existing market location (Aaker, 1997), and as such, have also been regarded as upscale or downscale extensions (Pitta & Katsanis, 2005). Groucutt (2005) refers to a range extension, stating that it is reliant on the claims made by the parent brand name, as well as its connection to particular aspects to introduce a variety of products or services in the identical realm of capacity. A cross-gender brand extension entails the implementation of an extension that extends from the masculine or feminine parent brand to introduce a feminine or masculine brand extension respectively. Essentially, this extends the brand name to target individuals of the other sex (Jung & Lee, 2006).

This study employs the broader definition of brand extension located in the studies of authors such as Gierl and Huettl (2011), Panda (2006) and Viot (2011), where brand extension denotes the employment of an existing brand name to introduce similar or dissimilar products into similar or dissimilar markets. This particular definition facilitates the exploration of an androgynous brand extension in different product categories in order to assess potential differences in consumers' reactions to them. This is discussed in the chapter that follows. Furthermore, such a brand extension is easier to implement and more widely adoptable as a strategy given that it is not restricted to satisfying certain price or quality specifications (e.g. vertical brand extension) nor restricted to use solely (or predominantly) by the other sex (e.g. cross-gender brand extension). Lastly, vertical extensions have been identified as possessing the highest level of risk and, thus, are less attractive to firms (Aaker, 1997). The emergence of the concept of brand extension in the literature is now addressed.

3.2.2 The Emergence of Brand Extensions as a Leverage Tactic

Research concentrating on brand leverage tactics surfaced in the late 1980's (Knappe & Rodestedt, 2013), with brand extension being a focal point (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Park, *et al.*, 1996). Brand extension research initially conducted concentrated on consumer behaviour regarding extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush, Shipp, Loken, Gencturk, Crockett, Kennedy, Minshall, Misurell, Rochford & Strobel, 1987). Following its establishment as a concept, most brand extension research was directed from a functional managerial standpoint (Keller, 1998). A significant portion of existing literature has concentrated on investigating product-related variables relating to effective brand extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Loken & John, 1993). Although much subsequent research has been conducted, numerous avenues within the brand extension environment remain under-investigated and under-established (Singh, Scriven, Clemente, Lomax & Wright, 2012).

Brand extensions are accompanied by various merits and possess potential downfalls. In examining brand extensions, it would be improper to fail to address each of these. Accordingly, brand extension advantages and disadvantages, as well as successful and unsuccessful brand extension examples are now addressed.

3.2.3 Brand Extension Success or Failure

Despite being a popular and widely employed strategy, the implementation of a brand extension is not without risk (Martinez & Pina, 2003). Its implementation can negatively influence brand perceptions, converting into weakened brand image (Aaker, 2004; Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Martinez & Pina, 2003; Pitta & Katsanis, 1995). Additional consequences can include: cannibalization and fractional or complete failure (Pitta & Katsanis, 1995).

The literature identifies two key determinants predicting extension success or failure, namely: likeness amid product categories (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Park, Milberg & Lawson, 1991; Viot, 2011) and a symbolic fit between the extended product and the original brand (Viot, 2011). Another fundamental dictating factor is quality (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). Symbolic fit, sometimes referred to as “the brand concept” (Park *et al.*, 1991), however, remains ambiguous (Viot, 2011). Despite the consensus acknowledging fit as a key predictor of success or failure (Völckner & Sattler, 2006), Viot (2011) noted that managers required methodologies to render this finding more practical.

Naturally, certain brands extend into diverse categories successfully (Reddy & Terblanche, 2005). This success is typically dependent on whether individuals believe the fundamental value of the brand to be principally functional or symbolic (Reddy & Terblanche, 2005), with symbolic brands generally being more capable of expanding into nonadjacent categories more effortlessly than functional ones. Authors have noted that in order to extend a brand into entirely new categories, companies must look beyond the strength of their brand in isolation, and transfer the parent brand’s central values from the first category to the new one (Lindstrom, 2009). Researchers have also advocated that suppliers in possession of positively evaluated brands should implement a brand extension in order to exploit brand value, and select extension products that are much like the central product, or employ communication processes to augment perceived similarity (Gierl & Huettl, 2011). However, where providers of a neutrally assessed brand are concerned, the question of whether it would be advantageous to initiate highly similar products and aim for elevated-similarity perceptions arises (Gierl & Huettl, 2011).

Research has noted that firms in possession of powerful consumer relationships can contemplate implementing brand extensions as a manner of launching novel products more forcefully than they may have in other respects (Kim, Park & Kim, 2014). In this case, such firms can contemplate extending into new product categories that are tangibly or practically different to existing categories, provided they can ensure that the new product’s feature notion is consistent with parent brand connections (Kim *et al.*, 2014). Otherwise, companies can launch variations of current products with entirely new features that could be inconsistent with parent brand connections,

provided the product categories are not faraway from parent categories (Kim *et al.*, 2014).

Additional factors that have been identified as influencing brand extension success or failure is now discussed in more detail below. Various advantages posed, factors augmenting extension success and examples of successful extensions are discussed first.

3.2.3.1 Brand Extension Success and Advantages

There is an immense amount of literature surrounding elements that affect brand extension success (Gierl & Huettly, 2011). In fact, Yorkston, Nunes and Matta (2010) depict more than fifty studies spanning the last fifteen years that have examined the success dimensions of brand extensions. A favourable brand attitude and an elevated extent of perceived likeness amid the central products and the extended ones are understood to be essential success dimensions for brand extensions (Czellar, 2003; Gierl & Huettl, 2011; Völckner & Sattler, 2006, 2007). This congruity between the parent brand and its extension has also been referred to as perceived similarity or fit, relatedness, concept constancy and typicality in the literature (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Bousch & Loken, 1991; Herr, Kardes & Kim, 1991; Völckner & Sattler, 2007).

Marketing communication has been identified as performing an integral function in defining the success of various sorts of brand extensions (Labroo, Dhar & Schwartz, 2008). Marketers can determine or reinforce the perceived fit of a brand extension through means such as stressing similarities amidst product features and advantages common to both the parent and extended brand (Frieden, 2013). Additionally, where a parent brand experiences high levels of brand loyalty; as well as a linkage between the original and extended brands, it is likely that it will experience progress (Jia & Jing, 2012).

Seyama (2006) examining brands within National Brand Limited's brand portfolio, concluded that strong competition, extension-particular advertising, close fit amid extension and parent brand and late entry of extensions connected to powerful parent brands were linked to performance of extensions.

Brand extensions, as a strategy, afford companies numerous additional benefits, comprising of diminished promotional expenses (Smith & Park, 1992; Sullivan, 1992), improved prospects of ascertaining retail distribution (Montgomery, 1978), minimized perceived risk for purchasers (Keller, 2002) and heightened parent brand equity (Keller & Lehmann, 2006; Swaminathan, 2003). Moreover, the market share of a new product that employs brand extension is typically approximately five percent greater than those that are launched as a new brand (Sullivan, 1992). Additionally, brand extensions implemented within a mature market typically have a superior likelihood of lasting survival (Sullivan, 1992). Furthermore, the implementation of a

brand extension can also augment the image of the brand (Balachander & Ghose, 2003), as it heightens brand visibility (Aaker, 1990). This, however, is not always the case: many authors (e.g. Arslan & Altuna, 2010; John, Loken & Joiner, 1998) in fact, challenge this assertion, noting that in certain instances the extension exerts a negative influence on the original brand. This, however, is discussed in more detail in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Recently, Canalichio (2013), noted brand extension as a strategy for leveraging an advantage in, what he referred to as “the brand game”. Canalichio (2013), citing Colgate’s interference of its category through its addition of Colgate Total, and its extension of the category via its introduction of Colgate Peroxyl and Colgate Orabase, exclaimed that Colgate were augmenting the customer experience; as well as expanding brand awareness via its acquisition of greater shelf space.

Some examples of successful brand extensions include the following:

- Both Louis Vuitton and Cartier, each possessing gross margins surpassing 79%, have successfully extended their brands into categories alongside their principal products (Reddy & Terblanche, 2005). Cartier has expanded from jewellery to accessories, watches and fragrances (Reddy & Terblanche, 2005) and Louis Vuitton has expanded from bags to accessories, attire, perfumes and jewellery (Reddy & Terblanche, 2005).
- Calvin Klein has effectively extended from clothing to a varied mix of products including perfume and underwear (Nakamoto, MacInnis & Jung, 1993). Caterpillar successfully extended from equipment and power systems to boots and clothing (Seyama, 2006). The Virgin brand has effectively extended into a diverse range of products including: magazines, airline services, vodka, radio stations, perfume and cellular telephones (Keller, 1998).

Having addressed success factors and presented examples of successful extensions, possible risks, failures and unsuccessful brand extensions are now addressed.

3.2.3.2 Brand Extension Risk and Failure

As mentioned previously, brand extension, as a strategy, is not without risk (d’Astous *et al.*, 2007). In fact, failure rates can be extremely high, amounting to 80 % in certain FMCG categories (Roll, 2010). As such, brand extensions require a substantial extent of strategic planning in an attempt to evade extension failure (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012).

One potential identified threat is the weakening of the brand image, particularly where several extensions exist (Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Sharp, 1993). Another danger results from managements’ “overconfidence” in the new product’s achievement and the

consequential underinvestment in marketing endeavours (d'Astous *et al.*, 2007). Companies should comprehend, then, that the ultimate success of an extension does not depend entirely on the extension itself, but is, rather, significantly connected to the marketing efforts initiated (d'Astous *et al.*, 2007). Further, brand extension failure can prompt damaging associations that can, in some instances, be irreparable (Aaker, 1990). Such failures pose the risk of altering previous opinions of the parent brand (Loken & John, 1993), sometimes damaging the original brand image, resulting in significant harm to brand equity (Gurhan-Canli & Maheswaran, 1998; Swaminathan, Fox & Reddy, 2001). Aaker (1997) noted that upscale and downscale (or vertical) brand extensions pose the highest risk of all extension strategies, and should generally be avoided. Consequently, such extensions are not examined in this work.

The possible negative influence that an extension can exert on the original brand is the foremost concern with the implementation of an extension and, as such, is widely addressed in the literature. Studies have explored the influence on: parent brand image (e.g. Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Martinez & De Chernatony, 2004; Martinez & Pina, 2003), brand equity (Dwivedi & Merrilees, 2013), original brand assessment (Chen & Yang, 2013), brand name and associations (John *et al.*, 1998). In this regard, certain authors, reported negative effects (Doraiswamy, 2011; John *et al.*, 1998; Martinez & De Chernatony, 2004), others noted positive influences (Aaker, 2012); and others still reported both positive and negative effects depending on the context (Chen & Chen, 2000; Chen & Yang, 2013).

Haig (2003) cited two aspects as being key instigators of brand extension failure. Firstly, the author noted that where firms do not possess a strong understanding of what their brands represent, they sometimes implement extensions into inapplicable categories (Haig, 2003). Secondly, certain extensions that were extremely alike to central brands caused subsequent cannibalisation. Haig (2003) proclaimed that even significant advertising resources cannot rectify the aforementioned mistakes, citing Miller Regular's \$50 million attempt to do so.

While the implementation of a brand extension can influence the perceived image negatively, high fit amid the original brand and the extension can reduce the negative influence (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). Further, the decrease in image equity as it were, is more substantial when the original image and quality are greater (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). Attitude and familiarity have also been found to influence this image, but to a lesser extent (Arslan & Altuna, 2010).

Some examples of unsuccessful brand extensions include the following:

Examining the one hundred greatest branding failures, Haig (2003), noted that a fifth of the failures were brand extensions. Extension collapses of recognized brands included: Harley Davidson fragrance, Heinz All Natural Cleaning Vinegar, Miller

regular beer, Virgin Cola, Bic underwear, Cosmopolitan yoghurt and Pond's toothpaste (Haig, 2003). Additional industry illustrations of unsuccessful brand extension include Levi's suits and Kleenex diapers (Aaker, 1990). These examples illustrate that even extensions that stem from extremely successful brands are capable of being unsuccessful (Aaker, 1990).

Ultimately, however, consumers' assessments of brand extensions (Klink & Smith, 2001) play a large part in dictating whether a brand extension will succeed or fail (Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). It is, therefore, crucial that both marketers and managers comprehend the various factors that influence consumers' evaluations of brand extensions (Estes *et al.*, 2011; Völknner & Sattler, 2007). Consequently, brand extension evaluation is a central construct of this work.

3.3 BRAND EXTENSION EVALUATION

This section introduces the concept of brand extension evaluation so as to facilitate an understanding of the manner in which all ensuing constructs are cogitated. Before doing so, the notion of brand evaluation must be briefly discussed.

Brand evaluation entails the manner in which an individual assesses a brand. Particularly, it comprises an individual's feelings towards, and perception of a brand. A consumer's overall assessment of a brand captures the meaning that consumers assign to a brand, which influences their purchase behaviour (Low & Lamb, 2000) as well as dictates the long-term success and sustainability of the brand (Hoek, Dunnett, Wright & Glendall, 2000). Brand evaluation is a function of brand utility, inferring that it is dependent on a brand's value of the attribute and is regarded as being pivotal in brand choice (Nedungadi, 1990). Having provided a brief description of brand evaluation, brand *extension* evaluation is now discussed.

As introduced in the final section of the preceding chapter, a brand extension occurs where a company leverages existing brand loyalty and awareness and introduces a new product onto the market in either a similar or dissimilar category. Introduced above was the concept of brand evaluation: an individual's perception and feelings towards a brand. This section combines these two aspects, introducing brand extension evaluation, namely the process whereby individuals assess a brand that extends from an existing one. Authors have asserted that the investigation of consumers' evaluation of brand extensions is essential for managers and marketers (Estes *et al.*, 2011; Monga & Gürhan-Canli, 2012; Völknner & Sattler, 2007).

Brand extension success can be computed in numerous manners. Some of these include: via market share, profitability, or the magnitude of years the brand extension has endured (de Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riely & Harris, 1998; Reddy, Holak & Bhat, 1994 as cited by Grime Grime, Diamantopoulos & Smith, 2002).

However, the bulk of brand extension literature concentrates on the consumer outlook and their evaluations or assessments of a brand extension and the original brand (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Milberg, Park & McCarthy, 1997; Nijssen, Schaepman & Sloot, 1996 as cited by Grime *et al.*, 2002; Gail, 1993). These consumer evaluations of brand extensions have emerged as a leading topic warranting a substantial amount of consideration from marketing scholars (Echambadi, Arroniz, Reinartz & Lee, 2006). The motivation for employing this perspective arises as a result of two chief motivations (Grime *et al.*, 2002). Firstly, consumer evaluations are vital as they are a central feature in signifying both brand extension and original brand success (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Bousch & Loken, 1991 as cited by Grime *et al.*, 2002; Klink & Smith, 2001; Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). Secondly, positive consumer evaluations are considered to be vital in augmenting a brand's equity, or the additional value a brand awards to a product (Farquhar, Herr & Fazio, 1990; Pitta & Katsani, 1995 as cited by Grime *et al.*, 2002), with this equity being a key instigator of a competitive advantage (Nakamoto *et al.*, 1993 as cited by Grime *et al.*, 2002). Consequently, it is crucial that both marketers and managers comprehend the various factors that influence consumers' evaluations of brand extensions (Estes *et al.*, 2011; Völknér & Sattler, 2007). Thus, the past two decades have witnessed an emphasis on elements affecting individuals' evaluations of brand extensions (Kim *et al.*, 2014). This work, in alignment with the bulk of brand extension literature, therefore, focuses on the consumer evaluation outlook.

Consumer evaluations of brand extensions have, however, been operationalized in numerous manners in the literature (Grime *et al.*, 2002). As such, numerous divergent variables have been examined with respect to brand extension evaluation, including: brand equity assessments (Doraiswamy, 2011); brand image, relationship and personality (Broniarczyk & Alba, 1994; Fournier, 1998; Glynn & Brodie, 1998; He, 2012; Kim *et al.*, 2014); brand extension type (Doraiswamy, 2011); branding strategy (Park, McCarthy & Milberg, 1993, Park *et al.*, 1996; Thompson, 1997); consumer certainty (Smith & Andrews, 1995); complementary extensions (Kim *et al.*, 2014; Shine, Park & Wyer, 2007); consumption situations (Graeff, 1997); consumer innovativeness (Hem, de Chernatony & Iversen, 2003; Klink & Athaide, 2010; Klink & Smith, 2001); consumer knowledge (Roux & Boush, 1996); favourability (Boush & Loken 1991; Hem & Iversen, 2003); fit (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Broniarczyk & Alba, 1994; Chung & Kim, 2014; Czellar, 2003; Doust & Esfahlan, 2012; Frieden, 2013; Hem *et al.*, 2003; Jung & Lee, 2006; Loken & John, 1993; Monga & John, 2010; Ulrich, 2013; Van de Wetering, 2007); gender roles (Frieden, 2013); mood conditions (Barone, Miniard & Romeo, 2000); perceived risk (Hem *et al.*, 2003; Srivastava & Sharma, 2011a); perceived quality (Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Bottomley & Doyle, 1996; Hem *et al.*, 2003; Sunde & Brodie, 1993); perceived complexity of the extension (Aaker & Keller, 1990; d'Astous *et al.*, 2007); self-monitoring (Hogg *et al.*, 2000); and similarity or congruity and incongruity between original and extended brand (Jung & Tey, 2010; Maoz & Tybout, 2002; Srivastava & Sharma, 2011b).

However, within these various factors, authors repeatedly assert that evaluations greatly depend on consumer perceptions of fit (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Burnaz & Bilgin, 2011; Chung & Kim, 2014; Czellar, 2003; Doust & Estfahlan, 2012; Monga & John, 2007; Park *et al.*, 1991; Ulrich, 2013), with these fit perceptions dictating an extension's success (Barone *et al.*, 2000; Bhat & Reddy, 2001; Morrin, 1999 as cited by Wu & Lo, 2009). Additional variables that have been recurrently employed in the extension literature and repeatedly found to exert an influence on consumer behaviour, include: attitude towards the *extension* (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Broniarczyk & Alba, 1994; Burnaz & Bilgin, 2011; Czellar, 2003; Jung & Tey, 2010; Nakamoto *et al.*, 1993; Rühle, Völckner, Sattler & Hatje, 2012; Ulrich, 2013); attitude towards the *original brand* (post-extension) (Czellar, 2003; Jung & Lee, 2006; Jung & Tey, 2010; Ulrich, 2013); and purchase intent (or likelihood of purchasing) (Frieden, 2013; Keller & Aaker, 1992; Kim, Lavack & Smith, 2001; Park, Kim & Kim, 2002; Rühle *et al.*, 2012; Ulrich, 2013). Lastly, the appropriateness of examining brand preference within gendered brand and brand identity studies has been confirmed (Bakker, 2014). Consequently, in alignment with Ulrich (2013), as well as with the above-mentioned comparable studies, the following six variables constitute the brand extension evaluation construct employed in this study: perception of fit (overall and brand image), attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), brand preference and purchase intent. This decision was motivated as a result of these particular variables being repeatedly employed and affirmed as exerting an influence on consumer evaluations of brand extensions. Each evaluation dimension is now addressed, in turn, beginning with perceived fit.

3.3.1 Perceived Fit

Perceived fit is realised where a consumer accepts the new product as rational and expected (Tauber, 1988), or where an individual believes the new item to be in alignment with the original brand (Aaker & Keller, 1990). The concept has been accredited to Tauber (1981) who acknowledged a “rub off” of perceived advanced proficiency, efficiency or applicable imagery and suggested that there should exist a particular advantage of the original brand that is the identical advantage proposed and anticipated in the new extension. Perceived fit, as noted previously, is possibly the foremost pertinent strategic element in the brand extension evaluation process (Doust & Estfahlan, 2012; Park *et al.*, 1991) and should be a chief concern when attempting to introduce a brand extension (Boush & Loken, 1991). It is, therefore, a chief aspect of evaluation assessed in this work.

Despite agreement that fit is considerably vital, there is, however, noteworthy disagreement regarding its dimensions (Muroma & Saari, 1996 as cited by Grime *et al.*, 2002). Fit, as such, consists of various dimensions in the literature, including brand concept consistency, similarity, typicality, connection and relatedness (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991; Farquhar *et al.*, 1990; Park *et al.*, 1991 as cited

by Grime *et al.*, 2002). Similarity, typicality and relatedness, themselves, are also frequently unclear and little distinction amid them exists in the literature (Muroma & Saari, 1996). Nevertheless, higher attitudes regarding the extension are typically reported wherever a perception of fit amid the two products exists (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Likewise, the higher the perceived similarity amid the parent brand and the extension, the larger the transmittance of favourable or unfavourable affect is to the extension (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Broniarczyk & Alba, 1994; Loken & John, 1993). Thus, individuals typically prefer brand extensions in product categories closer to the parent brand's category (Boush & Loken, 1991); or where brand image perceptions between the original and extended brand are similar (Bhat & Reddy, 1998; Park *et al.*, 1991). Accordingly, key consequences of perceptions of fit are favourable or unfavourable brand extension evaluation; as well as the enhancement or dilution of the original brand assessment (Aaker, 1990; Aaker & Keller, 1990; Keller & Aaker, 1992; Ries & Trout, 1986 as cited by Grime *et al.*, 2002). Where fit is lacking, no connections are transmitted but where it exists, the transmittal is enabled (Van de Wetering, 2007). In fact, where enhancement transpires, consumers report more favourable assessments of the original brand following the introduction of a brand extension, as compared to original responses towards the parent brand (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Bottomley & Doyle, 1996; Grime *et al.*, 2002; Sunde & Brodie, 1993). Conversely, an unsuccessful brand extension can generate harmful associations with the parent brand (Loken & John, 1993; Park *et al.*, 1993; Park *et al.*, 1996), referred to as dilution, or a negative alteration in consumer opinion (John, Loken & Joiner, 1998). This usually transpires when particular extension associations are inconsistent with the family brand (Loken & John, 1993; Park *et al.*, 1993). Monga and John (2010), however, contend that not all brands abide by this principle. In fact, numerous effective extensions have successfully extended into diverse categories (Frieden, 2013). In other cases, Jung and Lee (2006) noted that perceived fit was greater amongst males for the functional category than the symbolic one; but that perceived fit among females was similar across product categories. Ye (2008) reported similar findings with regards to males, noting that masculinity could foresee functional brand equity only in China and not the United States of America but that femininity could be a predictor of functional brand equity in both.

In an endeavour to reconcile the various divergent dimensions of fit, certain authors opt to assess perceptions of *overall* fit (e.g. Jung & Lee, 2006). Thus, this work in alignment with prior comparable works (Bhat & Reddy, 1997; Jung & Lee, 2006) assesses perceptions of overall fit. Moreover, in an attempt to comprehensively investigate fit as a dimension of extension evaluation, this work also employs what authors have deemed the second chief basis of fit, namely perception of brand image fit (Bhat & Reddy, 1998; Park *et al.*, 1991). Employing both of these two aspects of fit as a dimension of brand extension evaluation is in agreement with previous comparable studies (Jung & Lee, 2006).

The first two dimensions of extension evaluation, namely perception of overall fit and perception of brand image fit were introduced above. The third and fourth aspects of brand extension evaluation examined in this work, namely attitude towards the extension and attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) are now attended to below.

3.3.2 Attitude Towards the Extension and Towards the Parent Brand Post-Extension

Prior to addressing attitude towards the extension and the original brand post-extension, brand attitude is briefly discussed.

Brand attitude has been acknowledged as being a vital brand association aspect (Aaker & Keller, 1990). The concept is typically based on particular features, with examples including durability, frequency of faults, serviceability, dimensions or performance (Garvin, 1984). Nevertheless, brand attitude may additionally comprise affect that is not mirrored in the measured features even where an expansive group of features is incorporated (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Studies where authors have constructed multi-attribute models of preference have incorporated a general wide-ranging element of attitude towards a brand that is not elucidated by the brand feature values (Srinivasan, 1979 as cited by Aaker & Keller, 1990). Overall brand attitude may be stored and recalled in memory independently from the core feature information (Carlston, 1980; Risky, 1979 as cited by Aaker & Keller, 1990). Having provided a brief explanation pertaining to brand attitude in a general sense, attitude towards the extension and towards the parent brand post-extension is now set-forth. In so doing, these concepts are addressed in an evaluation context.

Aaker and Keller (1990) reported higher attitudes regarding the brand extension where: a) a perception of fit existed amid the two products along one of three scopes (capabilities of the manufacturer of the original product in the extension category, the product category's complementability, and substitutability), b) a perception of elevated quality of the parent brand existed; or c) when individuals perceived the extension as being difficult to implement. Following Aaker and Keller's (1990) work, researchers have attempted to replicate and expand on the original findings, with studies being conducted in varying contexts including India, New Zealand, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (e.g. Sunde & Brodie, 1993; Bottomley & Doyle, 1996; Patro & Jaiswal, 2003; Van Riel, Lemmink & Ouwersloot, 2001 as cited by Burnaz & Bilgin, 2011). Notwithstanding this, these replications have witnessed wavering results: some in agreement with the original findings and some reporting contradictory results (Burnaz & Bilgin, 2011). Certain additional findings are now forwarded.

Broniarczyk and Alba (1994) suggest that individuals assess an extension according to the perceived product category fit and that their evaluations are chiefly motivated

by the brand associations for them. Similarly, Park *et al.* (1991) reported that where individuals evaluate an extension they assess information concerning both product aspect likeness and concept constancy, with this concept being more aligned with brand image than tangible features. Therefore, the more the individual perceives the brand extension to be in alignment with the core or original image or concept, the more positive their attitude concerning the extension is likely to be (Burnaz & Bilgin, 2011). Conversely, where consumer's perceptions of appropriateness amid the parent brand and the extension decreases, their attitude towards the parent brand (in terms of brand extension evaluation) reduces (Abideen & Latif, 2011).

As mentioned in the previous section regarding fit, consumer evaluations of extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1990) and the original brand (Loken & John, 1993) are more positive where the individual perceives there to be greater fit amid the two. Further, attitude levels are also augmented where consumers believe that the extension was not implemented with ease, or where perceptions of elevated quality of the parent brand exist (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Jung and Lee (2006) proposed a positive correlation amid extension evaluation and attitude towards the parent brand, offering a possible elucidation by noting that an incongruous extension not only influences the assessment of the brand extension, but also influences individuals' attitudes concerning the original brand. The authors noted that this clarification was in line with Aaker's (1991) findings. Likewise, attitude concerning the extension, or a tendency to react positively or negatively to the extension (Chapman & Aylesworth, 1999), has been stated as being positively associated to the modification of attitude regarding the original brand (Chen & Chen, 2000; Loken & John, 1993).

Attitude towards the brand extension, as well as attitude towards the original brand post-extension, have been employed in numerous comparable studies (e.g. Aaker, 1990; Aaker & Keller, 1990; Keller & Aaker, 1992; Czellar, 2003; Frieden, 2013; Jung & Lee, 2006; Park *et al.*, 1991; Ulrich, 2006, 2013). The bulk of these employ these variables as aspects of brand or brand extension evaluation. Furthermore, these attitudes have repeatedly been found to affect consumer behaviour. Thus, in alignment with these similar studies, this work employs attitude towards the brand extension as well as attitude towards the original brand post-extension as dimensions of extension evaluation. The latter's incorporation was motivated by two stimuli. Firstly, as noted, this practice is in accordance with extant literature. Secondly, a major (and arguably only) shortfall associated with the introduction of a brand extension concerns the original parent brand. Particularly, potential negative side-effects can include: parent brand image dilution, or a damage of existing brand equity (Loken & John, 1993; Park *et al.*, 1993; Park *et al.*, 1996). Thus, in an attempt to gauge this potential negative consequence of an extension, attitude towards the original brand was assessed prior to the introduction of the extension, and then again afterwards. This facilitated insight (albeit limited) into consumers' attitudes towards the brand following the brand extension. As brand equity research can be conducted from a consumer's perspective, assessing their perceptions and attitudes towards a

brand (Soomro, Kaimkhani, Hameed & Shakoor, 2012), findings in this regard would offer an understanding of potential impacts the introduction of an androgynous brand extension had on parent brand equity.

Literature concerning both attitude towards the extension and attitude towards the parent brand (post-extension) was presented in this section. Accordingly, the third and fourth elements of brand extension evaluation have been addressed. Logically then, the next dimension of evaluation, namely brand preference, must now be attended to.

3.3.3 Brand Preference

Brand preference is narrowly connected to brand choice, enabling decision making and triggering the purchase activity (Ebrahim, 2011). When an individual exhibits brand preference, it indicates that he or she will select that particular brand over other competitive ones in a product category that is either identical or very similar (Michman, Mazze & Greco, 2003). Understanding the consumer preferences is an imperative input when creating and implementing marketing strategies (Ebrahim, 2011). Particularly, ascertaining such understanding exposes the heterogeneity of consumer selections that typically induces effective segmentation strategies (Ebrahim, 2011).

The concept of preference has been contemplated in numerous divergent disciplines including sociology, economy and psychology (Ebrahim, 2011). Still, no universal definition of preference has emerged (Ebrahim, 2011). Economists cogitate preferences as being unchanging and exogenous – capable of being comprehended precisely and typically exposed via consumer action (Ebrahim, 2011). However, individual preferences are not constant and unchanging and are capable of being either endogenous or exogenous in nature (Ebrahim, 2011). In a marketing context, preference is generally accepted as being the appeal or selection of an alternative or substitute (Ebrahim, 2011). Moreover, preferences are behavioural propensities (Zajonc & Markus, 1982 as cited by Ebrahim, 2011). An assortment of definitions for brand preference is present in the literature. However, these varying definitions generally fall in close proximities of the following three descriptions: brand preference is repeatedly expressed as the consumer's inclination towards a particular brand that alters in accordance with the prominent viewpoints that are triggered at a specific time; an individual's partiality towards a specific brand; or the degree to which an individual favours or prioritises a certain brand over another brand (Ebrahim, 2011; Singh, Ehrenberg, & Goodhardt, 2008). It is important to stress that brand preference differs from brand loyalty (Ebrahim, 2011). The former signifies the attitudinal brand loyalty minus the deed of recurrent purchase: the "brand-oriented loyalty" (Ebrahim, 2011: 4). Accordingly, brand preference is connected to brand loyalty but the latter is typically more stable, illustrated via the long-term continual purchasing action (Ebrahim, 2011).

Extant literature regarding brand preference typically falls into one of two groups:

studies that explore the influence of consumer-associated factors, or ones that investigate brand-associated factors (Ebrahim, 2011). Authors that conducted studies that fall into the first group generally focused on the affect that cultural, individual, social and mental elements exerted, with the bulk of these works reporting that alterations in an individual's lifestyle are capable of altering their brand preferences (Ebrahim, 2011). Particularly, the individual's personality characteristics and values, for example their self-monitoring traits, are understood to be crucial forecasters of brand preference (Ebrahim, 2011; Rhee & Johnson, 2012). Closely linked to this body of work is research that explores the interface amid the self-image and the brand's image – with self-image congruence (described earlier) emerging as a fundamental predictor of brand preference (Ebrahim, 2011; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Rhee & Johnson, 2012). This self-brand relationship is the central tenet of this work. In a similar vein, gender identity congruence literature asserts that preferences are displayed for brands that possess similar identities to a consumer's gender identity (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Where such congruity is not achievable, feminine individuals occasionally prefer incongruent brands, but the same cannot be said for their masculine counterparts (Robbie & Neale, 2012). The alternate body of preference literature investigates aspects such as price and promotion and reports that brand elements, particularly perceived value, exert strong influences on brand preference (Ebrahim, 2011). An illustration of these promotion-related cues can be observed in Christian and Sunday's (2013) study. The authors' findings reported that advertising that portrays a friendship situation and stresses group purchasing outcomes (such as security and acceptability of choice) can dramatically increase consumer preference for alcoholic beverages. This study explores two brand/product-related aspects: product category type and the gender of the parent brand. These concepts are addressed in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Two sources of consumer brand preference are acknowledged in existing literature: brand image and brand identity (Aaker & Keller, 1996; Aaker, Keller & Joachimstaler, 2000; Keller, 1993; 2003 as cited by Sääksjärvi & Samiee, 2011). The former is elucidated as consumers' perceptions of a particular brand, while the latter is understood to be a distinct group of brand associations that companies endeavor to manufacture to fashion or uphold (Keller, 2003). Thus, brand identity can be described as being the manner in which companies strive to be viewed, whereas brand image denotes the manner in which the brand actually *is* regarded (Sääksjärvi & Samiee, 2011). Alterations in brand preference are typically induced by modifications in either the brand's image or identity (McEnally & de Chernatony, 1999). In certain cases, brand image has mediated the relationship amid brand identity and preference (Sääksjärvi & Samiee, 2011). However, generally consumers will decipher a brand's identity forwarded by a company, transform this into a brand image, and this image then dictates their preferences (Martinez & de Chernatony, 2004). Similar to brand image, brand personality (a set of human traits typically associated with a brand)(Aaker, 1997) often dictates consumer preferences (Biel, 1993; Chiu, Lin, Hsu & Chen, 2011; Sirgy, 1982; Zang, 2007). Generally speaking, brand preferences are

displayed for established or recognized brands that have been present in a market for an extended period of time, with little preferences being exhibited regarding new brands or ones that consumers are unacquainted with in a particular product category (Dinlersoz & Pereira, 2007). One way of mitigating such low preference levels, as noted in the previous chapter, is to introduce such brands via a brand extension – with the existing brand equity of the parent brand facilitating higher acceptance and preference levels for the extended brand – even where this occurs in a new product category.

Within a brand extension context, also outlined previously, stronger preferences are displayed where consumers perceived there to be high levels of fit amid the parent and extended brands (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Where the consumer is exposed to certain visual cues, such as a generic picture, however, these preferences can be shifted towards preferring higher quality brands (Meyvis, Goldsmith & Dhar, 2012). Authors also propose that consumers display preferences for brand extensions that have similar *positioning* to the original brand (Park *et al.*, 1991).

This section delineated certain relevant theory regarding brand preference. As such, the penultimate dimension of brand extension evaluation has been addressed. The final aspect of evaluation in this work, namely purchase intent is now discussed below.

3.3.4. Purchase Intention

Purchase intent can be elucidated as a person's aim to purchase a particular brand that he or she has selected for him or herself following a particular assessment (Khan, Ghauri & Majeed, 2012). Moreover, purchase intention has been utilized repeatedly in a variety of comparable studies assessing extension evaluation and is, thus employed as the final dimension comprising brand extension evaluation in this study (Burnaz & Bilgin, 2011; Frieden, 2013; Park *et al.*, 2002; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ulrich, 2013).

In the context of this work it is important to note that a consumer's gender identity has been found to affect their purchase intentions (Friden, 2013; Ulrich, 2013). Furthermore, brand knowledge (comprising of brand awareness and brand image [Mackay, 2001; Pappu & Cooksay, 2005]) as well as an individual's past experiences, influence consumers' purchase intentions (Khan *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, brand attitude typically exerts a positive influence on purchase intention (Khan *et al.*, 2012). This attitude towards the brand, as well as additional brands within an individual's consideration group, predicts his or her purchase intention (Laroche & Sadokierski, 1994; Laroche & Zhou, 1996 as cited by Khan *et al.*, 2012). Perceived performance and quality function as crucial antecedents of value, with this, in turn, prompting repurchase aims (Olorunniwo & Hsu, 2006).

With respect to brand extensions in particular, high brand equity exerts a positive affect on an individual's purchase intention, with respect to new brand extensions, as the individual typically trusts such brands to a larger extent as compared to brands in possession of low levels of equity (Anees-ue-Rehman, 2012). Particularly, this high equity reduces perceived risk during the assessment of a novel extension (Anees-ue-Rehman, 2012). Likewise, the brand relationship quality influences purchase intention with respect to the extended brand (Park *et al.*, 2002). Moreover, masculine individuals typically report higher purchase intention scores for extensions introduced within the symbolic product category than those introduced in the functional one (Frieden, 2013). Affective commitment regarding the current brand in the extension category is negatively connected to purchase intention, with product involvement augmenting purchase intention (Hansen & Hem, 2004). Additionally, similarity and a partiality towards bundling affects purchase intention of brand extensions in a positive manner (Hansen & Hem, 2004). Brand awareness affects the parent brand image, subsequently influencing an individual's attitude towards the original brand and influencing purchase intention of the extended product (Wu & Lo, 2009). Additionally, perceived fit exerts a larger influence than attitude towards the parent brand, signifying that brand association and product connection have noteworthy impacts on purchase intention of extensions (Wu & Lo, 2009). Furthermore, brand relationships directly affect an individual's purchase intention of a brand extension, irrespective of the likeness between the extension and the parent brand (Park & Kim, 2001). Additionally, where the extension was perceived as being dissimilar to the parent brand, brand relationships also indirectly affected purchase intention through influencing quality perceptions regarding the extension (Park & Kim, 2001).

This section offered a summary of relevant theory concerning purchase intent: delineating the concept's definition, forwarding findings regarding purchase intent in general, and then narrowing the focus of this literature to address purchase intent in an extension context. As purchase intent comprises the final dimension of extension evaluation in this work, brand extension evaluation has now been fully addressed. To recap, brand extension evaluation – in agreement with prior comparable works (Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013)- consists of six dimensions. To reiterate, these include: perceived overall fit, perceived brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent.

The specific formal expectations pertaining to brand extension evaluation are presented in subsequent sections of this chapter. Having addressed the literature concerning the gender identity gendered brand relationship *outcome* (i.e. brand extension evaluation), it is now necessary to expand on the relationship itself. As such, the ensuing section addresses gender identity congruity. Thereafter, the reverse situation, namely gender identity incongruity is discussed. Throughout, relevant findings in existing literature are forwarded. In addition, the formal expectations regarding each construct (and that guide this work) are set forth.

3.4 GENDER IDENTITY CONGRUITY AND INCONGRUITY

The concept of gender identity was introduced in the previous chapter. To recap: gender identity is an amalgamation of an individual's physiological gender characteristics, social gender roles and gender orientations (Kacen, 2000; Ye & Robertson, 2012); or the degree to which a person identifies with masculine or feminine personality characteristics (Robbie & Neale, 2012) and expresses the degree of masculinity and femininity that an individual internalizes into their self-concept (Fischer & Arnold, 1994). Furthermore, it has been found to affect an individual's level of cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, product involvement, purchase intent and males' responses to advertisements (Fischer & Arnold, 1994; Martin & Gnoth, 2009; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Given these findings, it is anticipated that gender identity will affect the evaluation of the brand extension. Put formally:

H_{1A}: Gender identity influences the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension (AE)

As noted previously, evaluation in this work comprises of six dimensions, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the parent brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intention. Acknowledging the literature introduced in the section above, the following expectations are forwarded for subsequent empirical testing:

H_{1A1}: Gender identity influences perception of overall fit

H_{1A2}: Gender identity influences perception of brand image fit

H_{1A3}: Gender identity influences attitude towards the parent brand (post-extension)

H_{1A4}: Gender identity influences attitude towards the extension

H_{1A5}: Gender identity influences brand preference

H_{1A6}: Gender identity influences purchase intention

For the purposes of this work, it is necessary to expand on the concept of gender identity already introduced. As such, gender identity congruity and incongruity are now discussed, beginning with the former. Following the presentation of appropriate literature concerning these two concepts, the formal expectations that facilitate subsequent empirical testing are offered. Self-concept congruity is addressed thereafter.

Consumption behaviour is understood to be in line with an individual's gender identity (Fugate & Philips, 2010). Otherwise stated, individuals purchase in manners

that are in alignment with their notion of self (Sirgy, 1982). In an effort to uphold gender image integrity, individuals purchase products that have a gender identity congruent with their own (Fugate & Philips, 2010). This is referred to as gender identity brand image congruity, or more simply as gender identity congruity. Literature affirms a congruent relationship amid gender identity and an individual's reaction to a gendered brand, including brand preference and attitudinal loyalty (Robbie & Neale, 2012), such that favourable responses (including purchase intent and brand preference) are repeatedly reported where congruence is achieved (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Moreover, it has recently been noted that an individual will more readily identify with a brand that they perceive to be congruent with their gender identity, than one they believe to be congruent with their biological sex (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Additionally, authors affirm that consumers whom regard gender identity as a focal and significant dimension of the image that they have of themselves, typically exhibit a greater partiality towards advertisements that are congruent with their gender identity (Chang, 2006; Feiereisen *et al.*, 2009; Worth, Smith & Mackie, 1992 as cited by Kliamenakis, 2011). Gender identity congruity, and its affect on consumer behaviour, is observable at both the brand and the product category level (Cewart, Fox & Wilson, 2002 as cited by Frieden, 2013). Researchers have reported that individuals with an androgynous gender identity typically exhibit elevated levels of brand preference towards an androgynous brand than towards a masculine brand (Kliamenakis, 2011). Furthermore, Grohmann (2009) demonstrated that congruency amid a consumer's gender identity and the masculine or feminine brand personality resulted in more positive evaluations of the brand.

Having introduced and discussed the notion of gender identity congruity, gender identity incongruity, the converse of the above situation, must now be addressed. Following this, the formal expectations regarding gender identity (in)congruity are forwarded.

Gender identity brand image incongruity, or more simply gender identity incongruity, then, occurs where the gender identity of the individual, and the gendered image of the brand are not congruent. When considering incongruity between gender identity and consumer response to gendered personalities, feminine individuals have been noted as being more accepting of masculine brands than masculine individuals have been of feminine ones (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Robbie and Neale (2012) conducted the first study that noted variances in the acceptance of incongruently gendered brands that occur on the basis of gender identity. Masculine individuals understand there to be a stigma associated with feminine characteristics and consequently avoid feminine brands (Robbie & Neale, 2012). This is similar to the behaviour exhibited by males where they are unlikely to accept feminine brands (Alreck, 1994; Jung & Lee, 2006; Patton, 2004). This phenomenon is defined as "opposite sex rejection" (Alreck, 1994: 14) and has also been noted in cross-gender brand extension literature (Frieden, 2013; Jung & Lee, 2006), where males were found to be less likely to exhibit positive evaluations of male to female (cross-gender) extensions, but where females were

found to accept female to male extensions. In fact, feminine individuals are typically more accepting of masculine and gender incongruent brands than vice versa (Robbie & Neale, 2012; Wolin, 2003).

In light of the findings in literature presented above, namely that consumption behaviour is acknowledged as being in line with an individual's gender identity, and that in an endeavour to uphold gender image integrity, individuals display positive behavioural outcomes when a brand's or product's image is congruent to their gender identity (including purchasing, preferring and exhibiting loyalty) (Frieden, 2013; Fugate & Philips, 2010; Robbie & Neale, 2012), it is expected that congruity will result in favourable evaluations of the extension. Incongruity, then, in comparison, is anticipated to elicit less positive assessments. As individuals with an androgynous gender identity possess an identity that is congruent with the androgynous brand extension, they are expected to display more favourable evaluation scores as compared to masculine, feminine and undifferentiated individuals whom possess an identity incongruent with the extension's brand image. Ensuing from this, the following expectations are formally forwarded:

*H_{1B}: Masculine individuals will exhibit **less** favourable evaluations of the AE as compared to androgynous individuals*

*H_{1C}: Feminine individuals will exhibit **less** favourable evaluations of the AE as compared to androgynous individuals*

*H_{1D}: Androgynous individuals will exhibit **more** positive evaluations of the AE as compared to masculine/ feminine/ undifferentiated individuals*

*H_{1E}: Undifferentiated individuals will exhibit **less** favourable evaluations of the AE as compared to androgynous individuals*

Brand extension evaluation comprises of the six aforementioned dimensions, namely: perception of overall and brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent. Therefore, the following expectations were formally posited:

*H_{1B1-6}: Masculine individuals will exhibit **less** favourable perceptions of overall fit/ perceptions of brand image fit/ attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)/ attitude towards the extension/ brand preference/ purchase intent scores towards the AE, as compared to androgynous individuals*

*H_{1C1-6}: Feminine individuals will exhibit **less** favourable perceptions of overall fit/ perceptions of brand image fit/ attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)/ attitude towards the extension/ brand preference/ purchase intent scores towards the AE as compared to androgynous individuals*

*H_{ID1-6}: Androgynous individuals will exhibit **more** positive perceptions of overall fit/ perceptions of brand image fit/ attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)/ attitude towards the extension/ brand preference/ purchase intent scores towards the AE, as compared to masculine/ feminine/ undifferentiated individuals*

*H_{IE1-6}: Undifferentiated individuals will exhibit **less** favourable perceptions of overall fit/ perceptions of brand image fit/ attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)/ attitude towards the extension/ brand preference/ purchase intent scores towards the AE, as compared to androgynous individuals*

This section detailed gender identity congruity and incongruity, expanding on the concept of gender identity introduced in the preceding chapter. In so doing, it furthered an understanding of the concept via an exposition of a key manner in which gender identity directs consumption behaviour. Particularly, this was noted as inducing partiality, amongst other favourable behavioural outcomes, towards A product or brand that possesses an image that is similar to the individual's identity. The section also put forth the formal expectations concerning the gender identity construct that guide this study. Firstly, hypotheses concerning a posited main effect of gender identity on brand extension evaluation were provided. Thereafter, hypotheses regarding potential differences between each of the gender identity segments were set forth.

Self-concept congruity is now addressed, expanding on the notion of self-concept introduced in Chapter 2 (section 2.5).

3.5 SELF-CONCEPT CONGRUITY

The concept of self-concept, interchangeably referred to as self-image (Quester *et al.*, 2000), was introduced in the previous literature chapter. To recap, the concept: alludes to the manner in which a person perceives himself or herself to be as an individual (Parker, 2009); is a multidimensional opinion of one's self that varies according to the situation encountered or social function performed (Aaker, 1999; Gould, 1991; Graeff, 1996; Marshall & Parker, 2004; Sirgy, 1982, 1986; Sutherland *et al.*, 2004; Zinkham & Hong, 1991); and consists of two fundamental facets, namely: the "real" or "actual-self" and the "ideal-self" (Aaker, 1999; Abel *et al.*, 2013; Gould, 1991; Graeff, 1996; Sirgy, 1982, 1986; Sutherland *et al.*, 2004; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). Moreover, self-image is a vital variable in comprehending consumer behaviour (Parker, 2005, 2009; Quester, Karunaratna & Goh, 2000), affecting purchase and brand decisions (Belk, 1988; Plummer, 2000; Sirgy, 1982; Zinkham & Hong, 1991), attitudes towards brands, consumer satisfaction, as well as brand preferences (Ebrahim, 2011; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Mehta, 1999; Rhee & Johnson, 2012; Sirgy *et al.*, 1997; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). In this vein, it is anticipated that self-concept will affect the evaluation of the brand

extension. As such, the following formal postulation is put forth for later empirical testing:

H_{2A}: Self-concept influences the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension

As brand extension evaluation comprises the six aforementioned facets in this study, this expectation is cogitated to the elements in the same manner. Thus, the following six hypotheses are formally set forth:

H_{2A1}: Self-concept influences perceptions of overall fit

H_{2A2}: Self-concept influences perception of brand image fit

H_{2A3}: Self-concept influences attitude towards the parent brand (post-extension)

H_{2A4}: Self-concept influences attitude towards the extension

H_{2A5}: Self-concept influences brand preference

H_{2A6}: Self-concept influences purchase intention

For the purposes of this work it is necessary to expand on the concept of self-concept introduced thus far. The ensuing discussion, in this light, addresses self-concept congruity.

Self-congruity is a fundamental concept in consumer behaviour research (Christodoulides & Veloutsou, 2009; Kim & Hyun, 2013; Quester *et al.*, 2000), with its significance being widely noted (Belk, 1988; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Richins, 1994; Wallendorf & Arnoud, 1988). In fact, an excess of 100 academic papers attend to both the theoretical and practical significance that self-congruity exerts on individuals' decision making (Aguirre-Rodriguez, Bosnjak & Sirgy, 2012). Specifically, self-concept brand image congruity elicits favourable product beliefs, attitudes, evaluations, preferences, satisfaction and affect regarding the brand and product (Ebrahim, 2011; Graeff, 1996; Liu, Li, Mizerski & Soh, 2012; Lu, 2014; O'Cass & Frost, 2002; Parker, 2005; Quester *et al.*, 2000; Rocereto & Mosca, 2012; Sirgy *et al.*, 1997; Sutherland, 2004), and can also operate as a medium to create sounder consumer-brand relationships (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012) and establish maintainable competitive advantages as well as brand equity (Aguirre-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2012).

The concept can be elucidated as the comparison between product-user image and the consumer's self-concept (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Kang, Tang & Lee, 2013; Liu *et al.*, 2012; Sirgy, 1986; Sirgy *et al.*, 1997), or the extent to which the image of the brand reflects that of the self-concept of the individual (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012).

Thus, two constructs form the central tenet of self-congruity theory, namely: “self-image” and “brand image” (Parker, 2005; 2009; Quester *et al.*, 2000). The concept is interchangeably referred to in the literature as self-image congruence (Sirgy *et al.*, 1997) and self-concept brand image congruence (Aguirre-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2012), both shortened to self-congruity (Sirgy, Lee, Johar & Tidwell, 2008). This arises as a result of the fact that, as noted in the previous chapter, self-image and self-concept are used interchangeably (Quester *et al.*, 2000). The larger the perceived congruency between the brand image and vital aspects of the individual’s self-concept, the higher the extent of self-concept brand image congruity (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). As a result of brands and products being an integral element in the manner in which consumers categorize themselves, they are likely to possess more positive attitudes regarding brands they believe to be in alignment with their self-image; and reduced favourability regarding brands they believe to be incongruent in this regard (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). Thus, as the distance amid self-image and brand reduces, or otherwise speaking that an elevated extent of self-brand image congruity exists, brand evaluation favourability rises (Graeff, 1996; Lu, 2014; Parker, 2009). In fact, increased similarity amid the two results in an elevated probability of a spectrum of favourable behaviours ensuing, including: product acquisition (Graeff, 1996; Liu *et al.*, 2012), positive brand assessment (Graeff, 1996), purchase intention (Erickson, 1997; Liu *et al.*, 2012; Sirgy *et al.*, 1997), preferences (Abel & Buff, 2010; Ebrahim, 2011; Graeff, 1996; Ross, 1971; Sirgy *et al.*, 1997; Sutherland, 2004), brand attitude (Ibrahim & Najjar, 2007; Parker, 2005), satisfaction (Sirgy *et al.*, 1997) and brand selection (Birdwell, 1968). This occurrence where consumers behave with respect to the similarity or dissimilarity of a brand’s image and their own self-image is sometimes referred to as the image congruence phenomenon or hypothesis (Birdwell, 1968; Graeff, 1996; Parker, 2009) and has been affirmed across numerous product categories and services (Parker, 2005). In fact, it extends into the brand extension realm too, where recent studies have found that congruency between the parent brand image and self-image affects the evaluation of a brand extension positively (Rhee, 2012).

Strictly defined, self-congruity is a social cognition concept that entails the self (Sirgy, 1986). This “self” is a structured, constant, theoretical notion comprised of understandings of the attributes of “me” or the “I”; as well as the understanding of the connection of “me” or the “I” to other individuals; in addition, further, to numerous features of existence, combined with the significances ascribed to such understandings (Rogers, 1959). The “self”, explained conceptually through self-concept theory, states that human behaviour is capable of being extensively effected by the creation and sustainment of an individual’s own self-concept (Wylie, 1961). Authors have continually reaffirmed that individuals consume in manners that are in alignment with their perception of self (Levy, 1959; Sirgy, 1982); and that strengthen their self-concepts (Sirgy *et al.*, 2008). They, therefore, both acquire and employ products and services that have a user image in alignment with their own self-image (Sirgy, 1982). This enables individuals to strengthen their personal identity or

perception of themselves (i.e. their self-concept or self-image)(Graeff, 1996; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Keller, 1993; Sirgy *et al.*, 2008), upholding a psychological balance and wellbeing (Aaker, 1996; Graeff, 1996). Thus, through the acquirement of brands thought to be alike to their self-concept (or with specific aspects of their actual or ideal self), as well as reporting favourable attitudes towards these, individuals realize self-consistency (Aaker, 1997; Graeff, 1996; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Niedenthal, Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1985). The psychological recompense and gratification a person ascertains from the communication of mind-sets that represent their fundamental viewpoints and self-image arises via the construction of self-identity and through verifying the belief of the sort of individual a person supposes to be (Parker, 2005). Due to the fact that a person cherishes their self-image, they direct their actions in such a way so as to augment and safeguard it – with this being partly achieved via the consumption of brands and products (Parker, 2005). Thus, self-congruity, or self-image congruence (Sirgy *et al.*, 2008), theory elucidates why individuals prefer and disfavour certain brands and products (Banister & Hogg, 2004; Kleine, Kleine & Kernan, 1993; Parker, 2005; Sirgy, 1982) as a result of self-expressive needs, a shared quality in human operation that additionally affects consumption (Parker, 2005).

As self-concept comprises of actual and ideal self (noted previously), actual and ideal self-congruity can be employed to forecast an individual's purchase aims, incentives, partiality, product assessment and behaviours (Graeff, 1996; Parker, 2009; Sirgy, 1985; Sirgy & Eriksen, 1996; Quester *et al.*, 2000). Individuals reportedly prefer brands they believe to be alike to a self-image they wish to convey in certain social environments that can be an ideal or actual self (Parker, 2005). Extant consumer behaviour literature is replete with studies that conclude that *actual* self-congruity (a match between the brand image and the individual's actual self-image) elicits a positive effect on numerous consumer behaviour constructs, including: brand attitude, brand preference, brand selection, purchase motivation, brand satisfaction and brand loyalty (Aaker, 1999; Birdwell, 1968; Erickson, 1996; Graeff, 1996; Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967; Parker, 2005; Ross, 1971; Sirgy, 1982, 1985, 1986; Sirgy, Grewal & Mangleburg, 2000; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Zinkham & Hong, 1991). Conversely, Graeff (1996) noted that evaluations of a publicly consumed product are more affected by *ideal* congruence (congruity with the ideal self) than by actual congruence. Likewise, Sirgy (1980) asserted that product partiality was influenced more extensively by ideal than actual self-congruity; and Rhee and Johnson (2012), similarly, noted that individuals' favourite brands were connected to their ideal self-concept. However, numerous authors note that self-congruity, regardless of it being with the actual or ideal self, induces favourable actions and opinions concerning products (Sirgy, 1985; Sirgy & Eriksen, 1996).

Concentrating on congruency amid self-concept and a brand is a vital strategic consideration (Rhee & Johnson, 2012). Communication investigators must realise that self-congruity principles are imperative when conducting research to ascertain a superior comprehension of ways to establish positive brand attitudes (Parker, 2005).

Additionally, as brands are progressively rendered less dissimilar with respect to product features, ascertaining ways in which to augment brand image through non-product features emerges as an imperative focal point in marketing terms (O'Cass & Frost, 2002). As such, self-congruity theories emerge as fundamental elements in the fabrication of enduring connections amid consumers and brands (Liu *et al.*, 2012; Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). The more an individual identifies with a brand, the stronger the emotional tie to that brand becomes (Turri, Smith & Kemp, 2013). Self-congruity studies continually progress in identity and symbolic consumption-associated literature including self-brand connection investigation (e.g. Escalas, 2004 as cited by Aguirre-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2012), and identity-founded incentive investigation (e.g. Oyserman, 2009 as cited by Aguirre-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2012).

Given the aforementioned findings, existing literature acknowledges that actual and ideal self-concept exert dissimilar influences on consumption behaviour. Moreover, given Rhee and Johnson's (2012), Sirgy's (1980) and Graeff's (1996) findings that evidenced that *ideal* self-concept exerted a stronger influence on consumption behaviours than *actual* self-concept; the following postulation is formally forwarded:

H_{2B}: Ideal Self-Concept exerts a stronger influence on brand extension evaluation as compared to Actual Self-Concept

Furthermore, brand extension evaluation is comprised of six items in this work, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent. Thus, the following expectations are formally offered:

H_{2B1}: The ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on perception of overall fit evaluations of the AE as compared to the actual self-concept

H_{2B2}: The ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on perception of brand image fit evaluations of the AE as compared to the actual self-concept

H_{2B3}: The ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on attitudes towards the original brand (post-extension) as compared to the actual self-concept

H_{2B4}: The ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on attitudes towards the extension as compared to the actual self-concept

H_{2B5}: The ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on brand preference as compared to the actual self-concept

H_{2B6}: The ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on purchase intent as compared to the actual self-concept

Certain recent studies outside the marketing domain have examined the potential moderating influence that self-concept exerts. Authors have noted that self-concept possesses an important moderator role and is vital to the understanding of leadership efficacy as a consequence of it being associated to “boundary conditions” of leadership behaviours and styles (van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, de Cremer & Hogg, 2004: 841). Additionally, self-concept moderates the leadership processes (Hogg, 2001; Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003; Lord & Brown, 2004 as cited by van Knippenberg *et al.*, 2004). Other disciplines have examined self-concept as a potential *mediator*. Here, authors noted that self-concept mediated cross-sectional relations of physical activity and sport participation (Dishman, Hales, Ward, Pfeiffer, Felton, Saunders, Dowda & Pate, 2006).

Furthermore, numerous facets of the self that are closely aligned or associated to an individual’s self-concept (Neill, 2005) are understood to exert moderating influences within a consumer behaviour context. Certain chief constructs in this regard include self-construal, self-esteem and self-monitoring (Kliamenakis, 2011; Hogg *et al.*, 2000; Neill, 2005). Moreover, these constructs have demonstrated this moderating influence within the context of brand extension and brand evaluation contexts. Lastly, Escalas (2013) stated that examining a potential interplay between identity aspects and their influence on consumption behaviour was a critical avenue to be explored. Thus, given this study’s endeavour to comprehensively understand the influence on self-concept on brand extension evaluation, it is necessary to assess a potential moderating influence exerted by self-concept.

Therefore, despite there being a paucity of studies that have investigated such an influence in prior *marketing* literature, directed by salient studies from other disciplines (particularly organizational psychology)(e.g. van Knippenberg *et al.*, 2004), and influences exerted by very similar constructs (e.g. self-esteem and self-construal)(Hogg *et al.*, 2000), it was anticipated that self-concept would exert a moderating influence on the central relationship of this study. Accordingly, the following formal postulation is set forth:

H_{2C}: Self-concept moderates the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation.

Given that brand extension comprises of six dimensions, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent, the following additional hypotheses are put forth formally for later empirical assessment:

H_{2C1}: Self-concept moderates the relationship between gender identity and perception of overall fit

H_{2C2}: Self-concept moderates the relationship between gender identity and perception of brand image fit

H_{2C3}: Self-concept moderates the relationship between gender identity and attitude towards the original brand post-extension

H_{2C4}: Self-concept moderates the relationship between gender identity and attitude towards the brand extension

H_{2C5}: Self-concept moderates the relationship between gender identity and brand preference

H_{2C6}: Self-concept moderates the relationship between gender identity and purchase intent

The above section set forth the formal hypotheses regarding self-concept in this study, informed by the provided theoretical backing. Firstly, it depicted the anticipated main effect that self-concept would exert on brand extension evaluation. Secondly, it expected *ideal* self-concept to exert a stronger influence on brand extension evaluation than *actual* self-concept. Lastly, it anticipated that self-concept would moderate the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation.

The final two constructs being examined in this study, namely product category and gender of parent brand are now addressed.

3.6 PRODUCT CATEGORY

The concept of product type is founded on the differentiation of products into two dissimilar sets: products believed to be chiefly utilized as a means to satisfy an instrumental function or ones predominantly consumed for affective reasons, sensory satisfaction or for pleasure (Tomaseti & Ruiz, 2009; Walpuski, 2010). The former is referred to as utilitarian or functional products, while the latter are called symbolic or hedonic products (Tomaseti & Ruiz, 2009).

Consumers acquire hedonic and utilitarian products for different purposes. Symbolic products are bought for the hedonism and enjoyment that they will offer (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Walpuski, 2010). As such, the motivation to acquire these objects surpasses the simple utility they may offer (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). The hedonistic aspect that drives the purchase and consumption of such items reinforces the fact that these products are affect-weighted (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). This high degree of implicit affect is prone to elicit significant emotional reactions in owners (Ang & Lim, 2006; Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). Consequently, hedonic (or symbolic) products are expected to influence the affective element of consumer attitude more significantly than with utilitarian products (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). Utilitarian

products, conversely, are procured primarily to satisfy functional requirements (Voss, Spangenberg & Grohmann, 2003). As a result, such products are not intrinsically affect-laden (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012). The purchase choice of these products is typically motivated by a cognitive process rather than consumer affect (Rocereto & Mosca, 2012; Voss *et al.*, 2003; Walpuski, 2010).

Individuals fabricate expectations regarding the advantages a product category possesses (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982; LeBoeuf & Simmons, 2010), and generally assess a product according to these (Chandon, Wansink & Laurent, 2000). Advantage expectations are either functional or symbolic (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). Products like soap, lawn mowers and batteries are regarded as being functional (or utilitarian) as they satisfy a function-driven need (Voss *et al.*, 2003), possessing tangible traits that present advantages for individuals (Addis & Holbrook, 2002). Conversely, products like university paraphernalia or sports team items satisfy symbolic needs such as self-identification, self-expression, social classification or group affiliation (Park, Jaworski & MacInnis, 1986).

Whether a product is image or function driven influences consumer evaluations of brand extensions (Jung & Lee, 2006). Symbolic brands emphasize biased, non-product advantages connected to intrinsic individual needs for social appreciation, personal communication and self-esteem (Soloman, 1983 as cited by Frieden, 2013). These benefits are typically related to user imagery (Park *et al.*, 1986). Functional brands, conversely, typically promote impartial, product-linked elements connected with physiological requirements, problem solving or aversion requirements (Fennell, 1978 as cited by Frieden, 2013).

Authors report that consumers display preferences towards a brand based on its symbolic characteristics, and not its functional ones (Bhat & Reddy, 1998; Frieden, 2013; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Leigh & Gabel, 1992). Likewise, other authors have reported that females are more likely to: purchase symbolic products connected to their emotional elements of the self, search for symbolic products as gifts, and be involved in symbolic brand benefits (Dittmar, Beattlie & Friese, 1995; Orth, 2005; Parsons, 2002 as cited by Frieden, 2013). Further, where two products are very alike both in terms of price and function, consumers display preference towards the product that signifies superior symbolic value (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005). Upon the backdrop of these studies that report more favourable outcomes for symbolic products than functional ones, the following is formally postulated for later empirical testing:

H_{3A}: The AE implemented in the symbolic product category received more favourable evaluations than the one implemented in the functional category.

As brand extension evaluation comprises of the previously mentioned six dimensions, namely: perception of overall and brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand

(post-extension) and towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent; the following anticipations are formally put forth:

H_{3A1}: The AE that extended in the symbolic product category will receive more favourable perceptions of overall fit than the AE in the functional category

H_{3A2}: The AE that extended in the symbolic product category will receive more favourable perceptions of brand image fit than the AE in the functional category

H_{3A3}: The AE that extended in the symbolic product category will receive more favourable attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) assessments than the AE in the functional category

H_{3A4}: The AE that extended in the symbolic product category will receive more favourable attitudes towards the extension than the AE in the functional category

H_{3A5}: The AE that extended in the symbolic product category will receive more favourable brand preference evaluations than the AE in the functional category

H_{3A6}: The AE that extended in the symbolic product category will receive more favourable purchase intention evaluations than the AE in the functional category

While Bhat and Reddy (2001) concluded that similarity between product categories of the parent and extended brand was of no importance with regards to brand extension evaluation, the converse has been repeatedly asserted in the literature. Indeed, a substantial portion of research conducted in the last two decades concentrating on the fit between a brand extension and the original brand showed that product category is imperative (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Ahluwalia, 2008; Völckner & Sattler, 2007). This category-alike influence typically arises as a result of a category-founded assessment process (Kim *et al.*, 2014). When a brand extension is alike to the original brand category, individuals center their assessment of the extension on the brand's category favorability (Boush & Loken, 1991; Milberg *et al.*, 1997). Additionally, studies have generally concluded that the higher the extent of perceived congruence amid the parent brand and the extended product's category, the more favourable individual's attitudes concerning the extension have been found to be (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Sunde & Brodie, 1993). In this regard, specifically, complementarity and substitutability were noted as being sound predictors of consumer attitude (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Further, brand extensions implemented in the identical product category are more anticipated where the brand was limited than where it was extensive; and, conversely, extensions very unlike the brand's existing products were regarded as less anticipated where the brand was limited, as opposed to expansive (Boush & Loke, 1991). Similarly, Reddy and Terblanche (2005), examining financial data spanning over ten years for 150 luxury brands; and interviewing a surplus of 300 executives globally, concluded a luxury brand's lucrativeness will typically grow

when the premium extent augments only when the brand extends into product categories nearby that of the key brand. Likewise, Rangaswamy, Burke, and Oliva, (1993) reported that a more archetypal brand was more capable of extending well to associated product categories, while a less typical brand might be capable of better extending to less associated product categories.

Authors have examined product category type and its possible influences within various realms. Prior research has concluded that the outcome of an extension is contingent on the perceived fit amid the original brand and the extended product category (Boush & Loken, 1991; Keller, 1998), with higher fit facilitating an effortless transferal of favourable connotations of the original brand to the extension and, consequently, augmenting the possibility of realizing an effective extension (Jung & Lee, 2006). Authors have noted that numerous recent studies have examined ethical elements influencing product assessment, doubting the favourable influence of these ethical elements (Lin & Chang, 2012, Luchs, Naylor, Irwin & Raghunathan, 2010; Torelli, Monga & Kaikati, 2012 as cited by Bodur, Gao & Grohmann, 2013). The authors (Bodur *et al.*, 2013), however, noted that advantage congruity amid ethical element and product category augmented product assessments. Additionally, individuals' purchase behaviour within the online context was notably influenced by the product category (Cho, Im, Fjermestad & Hiltz, 2003), with product category moderating the effect that a surcharge exerted on online purchases (Pan, Kuo, Pan & Tu, 2013).

The final construct of this study, namely gender of parent brand is now addressed.

3.7 GENDER OF PARENT BRAND

As noted in the previous chapter within the section detailing gendered brands (section 2.2), the gender of the brand can be described as the group of human personality characteristics linked to masculinity and femininity appropriate and suited to brands (Grohmann, 2009). Parent brands were also explained in the preceding chapter as being the original, or core brand from which a brand extension is introduced or implemented. Taken together, then, a gendered parent brand is the original brand that possessed either a masculine or feminine gendered image.

Gender-stereotyping literature has acknowledged that masculine characteristics are typically considered more highly, and are more widely desired, than conventional feminine ones (Ashmore, DelBoca & Wohler, 1986 as cited by Jung & Lee, 2006). As a result of individuals employing brands as a means of personality exhibition (Aaker, 1996 as cited by Jung & Lee, 2006), this elevated social inclination towards masculine characteristics manifests in their brand and product selection (Jung & Lee, 2006). It is also less challenging to allure women towards masculine-angled products than vice versa (Stuteville, 1971; Wolin, 2003). In fact, males typically avoid feminine products and brands; with this practise being deemed "opposite sex

rejection” (Alreck, 1994: 14) and has been repeatedly confirmed in the literature; and is largely discernable in daily reality (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Robbie and Neale (2012) affirmed that like much like their biological counterparts, masculine individuals, like males, displayed a feminine brand avoidance; while feminine individuals, like females, were more accepting of masculine brands. Additionally, more recent studies have found congruency between the parent brand image and self-image affects the evaluation of a brand extension positively (Rhee, 2012; Young, 2012). Further, Bhat and Reddy (2001) emphasised the significance of an extension’s fit with the image of the parent brand and consequently prompted managers to connect extensions to parent brand relation and image in individuals’ thoughts to ensure success in the market (Bhat & Reddy, 2001).

Most notably, the gender of the parent brand has been found to influence the evaluation of a cross-gender brand extension (Jung & Lee, 2006). Particularly, individuals typically display more positive evaluations of brand extensions that extend from a *masculine* parent brand than a *feminine* one, with authors noting, as mentioned above, a general preference for masculine traits in society (Alreck, 1994; Ashmore *et al.*, 1986; Jung & Lee, 2006). Given these findings in prior literature, the androgynous brand extension that extends from a *masculine* parent brand is anticipated to receive more positive evaluations than the extension conducted from an originally *feminine* parent brand. Thus, the following is postulated:

H_{4A}: The AE that extended from a masculine parent brand received more favourable evaluations than the one that extended from the feminine parent brand

Brand extension evaluation comprised of six dimensions in this study, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent. Accordingly, the following formal expectations were set forth:

H_{4A1}: The AE that extended from a masculine parent brand received more favourable perception of overall fit scores than the AE that extended from the feminine parent brand

H_{4A2}: The AE that extended from a masculine parent brand received more favourable perception of brand image fit scores than the AE that extended from the feminine parent brand

H_{4A3}: The AE that extended from a masculine parent brand received more favourable attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) scores than the AE that extended from the feminine parent brand

H_{4A4}: The AE that extended from a masculine parent brand received more favourable attitude towards the extension scores than the AE that extended from the feminine parent brand

H_{4A5}: The AE that extended from a masculine parent brand received more favourable brand preference scores than the AE that extended from the feminine parent brand

H_{4A6}: The AE that extended from a masculine parent brand received more favourable purchase intent scores than the AE that extended from the feminine parent brand

Extant literature has suggested that companies should consider introducing an androgynous brand. In fact, certain authors have stated that such an introduction is critical for long-term success (Fugate & Philips, 2010). Further, others have suggested that an androgynous brand would be more favourably received than any other gendered brand. This was motivated to occur as a result of a) the progressively increasing amount of androgynous individuals whom, as a result of gender identity congruity theory, would display a preference for androgynous brands and b) a widespread appreciation of androgyny in society that could witness masculine, feminine and undifferentiated individuals displaying favourable evaluations of an androgynous brand too (Fugate & Philips, 2010; KIAMANKIS, 2011; Robbie & Neale, 2012). In order to empirically assess the value of such a suggestion, this study investigated whether individuals displayed different evaluations of an androgynous brand, as compared to other gendered brands. This comparison is now addressed in more detail.

3.8 ANDROGYNOUS BRAND VS. MASCULINE AND FEMININE BRAND

The central premise of this study is that the introduction of an androgynous brand extension is likely to be a successful strategic move for companies. This supposition is largely based on four key factors. Firstly, there is a progressively increasing amount of androgynous individuals (Fugate & Philips, 2010; KIAMENAKIS, 2011). Given that individuals employ brands to express their identities (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Hogg *et al.*, 2000) as well as the fact that consumers exhibit preferences and favourable attitudes towards brands that possess similar images or identities to their own (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Robbie & Neale, 2012), there is thus a strong implication that androgynous brands will receive favourable evaluations by individuals. Lastly, given a societal inclination towards and appreciation of androgyny (Robbie & Neale, 2012), there is also a suggestion that other individuals may also display favourable responses towards an androgynous brand. However, in order to comment decisively on whether individuals would, in fact, respond more favourably towards an androgynous brand as compared to a masculine or feminine gendered brand, it was necessary to empirically assess this in this study. Given the aforementioned shifts in society, the following postulation was forwarded:

H_{5A}: The androgynous brand extension was evaluated more favourably than the masculine/feminine parent brand

Brand extension evaluation comprised of six dimensions in this study. However, these were specific to a brand *extension* context. In order to facilitate a comparison between the parent brand and the brand extension, evaluation aspects here were restricted to the more generally applicable evaluation dimensions, namely: attitude towards the brand, brand preference and purchase intent (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Accordingly, the following hypotheses were set forth:

H_{5A1}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable attitude towards the brand scores than the masculine/feminine parent brand

H_{5A2}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable brand preference scores than the masculine/feminine parent brand

H_{5A3}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable purchase intent scores than the masculine/feminine parent brand

In order to comprehensively assess this difference, it was also assessed while controlling for potential product category and gender of parent brand influences. This was motivated by the fact that studies have shown that both product category and gender of parent brand affect brand evaluation (Jung & Lee, 2006). Thus, the above postulations were investigated within each product category and for each brand gender. Accordingly, regarding the *symbolic* product category, it was formally anticipated that:

*H_{5A4}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable attitude towards the brand scores than the masculine/feminine parent brand within the **symbolic** product category*

*H_{5A5}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable brand preference scores than the masculine/feminine parent brand within the **symbolic** product category*

*H_{5A6}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable purchase intent scores than the masculine/feminine parent brand within the **symbolic** product category*

Likewise, regarding the *functional* product category, the following formal expectations were forwarded for later empirical assessment:

*H_{5A7}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable attitude towards the brand scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand within the **functional** product category*

*H_{5A8}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable brand preference scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand within the **functional** product category*

*H_{5A9}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable purchase intent scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand within the **functional** product category*

Regarding the **masculine** brand, the following was postulated:

*H_{5A10}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable attitude towards the brand scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand regarding the **masculine** brand*

*H_{5A11}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable brand preference scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand regarding the **masculine** brand*

*H_{5A12}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable purchase intent scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand regarding the **masculine** brand*

Similarly, regarding the **feminine** brand, the following was formally posited:

*H_{5A13}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable attitude towards the brand scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand regarding the **feminine** brand*

*H_{5A14}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable brand preference scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand regarding the **feminine** brand*

*H_{5A15}: The androgynous brand extension received more favourable purchase intent scores than the masculine/ feminine parent brand regarding the **feminine** brand*

All constructs examined in this work have now been introduced. The final section of this chapter offers a summary of the contents presented herein.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter served to introduce the remainder of the constructs being examined in this study. It also served to outline the formal postulations to be verified via empirical testing later. The chapter initiated with a discussion regarding brand extension.

Thereafter, it addressed the dependent variable of this study, namely: brand extension evaluation. This section began by focusing on brand evaluation more broadly, and then narrowed this focus to a brand *extension* context. Saliently, it outlined the six specific dimensions that comprised the brand extension construct in this dissertation, namely: perceived overall fit, perceived brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intention.

The chapter then explored gender identity congruity and incongruity, exploring relevant findings in existing literature and presenting the postulated hypotheses concerning these concepts in accordance. Chiefly, it was posited that gender identity would exert a main effect on brand extension evaluation. Moreover, as a result of gender identity congruence theory (Robbie & Neale, 2012), it was anticipated that androgynous individuals would display the most favourable evaluations of the androgynous brand extension. Self-concept congruity was addressed thereafter, expanding on the notion of self-concept introduced in Chapter 2 (section 2.5). Formal postulations concerning a main effect exerted by self-concept on brand evaluation were presented. Particularly, *ideal* self-concept was anticipated to exert a stronger influence on brand extension evaluation than *actual* self-concept. Lastly, it was posited that self-concept would moderate the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation.

Product category was addressed thereafter. A difference in brand extension evaluation in accordance with product category was posited. Specifically, the androgynous brand extension introduced in the *symbolic* product category was expected to receive more favourable evaluations than the androgynous brand extension in the *functional* category. Hereafter, gender of parent brand was explored. The discussion presented formal anticipations concerning differences in brand extension evaluation in accordance with the gender of the parent brand. It was postulated that the androgynous brand extension introduced from an originally *masculine* brand would receive more favourable evaluations than the one introduced from an originally *feminine* brand. Lastly, potential differences between the androgynous brand extension and masculine or feminine parent brand were explored, noting that it was anticipated that the *androgynous brand* would receive more positive evaluations than the *masculine/ feminine* brand. Having introduced all constructs examined in this work, this chapter concluded with a brief summary of the contents presented within in. The ensuing chapter portrays the methodology practices undertaken when examining these constructs.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous three chapters introduced the key aims of this research and then proceeded to provide context for the study. Furthermore, in addition to providing the context and structure of the research, the second and third chapters presented key findings in extant literature concerning the chief constructs employed in this work. As such, the preceding chapters served to present the constructs and the hypotheses. In a natural progression, this chapter now details the methodological considerations of this work. Specifically, it presents the procedures employed and course of action adhered to, as well as justifies the use of each. Further, this is done in sufficient detail so as to enable future replication of this work, which numerous authors acknowledge as being of significant importance (Winerman, 2013).

This chapter initiates with a discussion that considers the assumed research approach. The ensuing sections address the sampling, measurement, data collection and preparation, and statistical analysis aspects of the study. Particularly, the second last section details and justifies the employment of ANOVA, t-tests, linear regression and moderated multiple regression (MMR) technique as the principal statistical analyses utilized in this study. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research designs can be broadly categorized as exploratory or conclusive (Klarner, 2010; Malhotra, 2010; Malhotra & Birks, 2007; Parasuraman, Grewal & Krishnan, 2007). This design is the strategy, structure or blueprint of exploration to ascertain answers to research questions (Klarner, 2010). Each of these designs is now individually expanded on.

The chief aim of *exploratory research* is to deliver insight into, and a comprehensive comprehension of the problem encountered by the researcher (Klarner, 2010; Malhotra, 2010; Parasuraman *et al.*, 2007). Exploratory research is utilized where it is necessary to define the problem more specifically, recognise appropriate paths of action, or ascertain further insights prior to an approach being established (Malhotra, 2010; McDaniel & Gates, 1998). The required information is only roughly described, and the research process that is assumed is versatile and unstructured (Malhotra, 2010), typically employing a qualitative stance or secondary data (Klarner, 2010). Insight ascertained via exploratory research can be confirmed by conclusive research (Malhotra, 2010), and as such, provides a foundation for future research (Parasuraman

et al., 2007). As such, exploratory research can be employed to satisfy any of the following objectives: to establish a problem, or define it more specifically; to expose alternative paths of conduct; to develop hypotheses; to separate fundamental variables and relationships for subsequent exploration; to ascertain insight that will assist in constructing a procedure to handle the problem; or to determine priorities for subsequent research (Malhotra, 2010).

Conclusive research, in contrast, investigates precise hypotheses prior to deducing conclusions (Klarner, 2010), assisting researchers to validate discernments and choose suitable approaches (Parasuraman *et al.*, 2007), adopting an organised approach and structured design (Malhotra, 2010).

This work adopts a conclusive research design. It investigates hypotheses via a structured design and subsequently deduces verified conclusions. Conclusive research can, however, be either descriptive or causal (Parasuraman *et al.*, 2007; Malhotra, 2010).

The chief intention of *descriptive* research is to describe a phenomenon such as market traits or purposes (Key, 1997; Malhotra, 2010). It is also employed to satisfy one or more of the following: the estimation of the ratio of units in a stipulated population displaying particular behaviours, the establishment of particular perceptions concerning product traits, the ascertainment of the extent to which marketing variables are connected, or the constructing of particular forecasts (Malhotra, 2010). Despite the fact that descriptive research can establish the extent of connection amid variables, it is not fitting for investigating casual relationships (Malhotra, 2010).

Causal research, on the other hand, typically examines the influence that a variable exerts on another while facilitating the controlling of alternative elucidations or extraneous variables (Parasuraman *et al.*, 2007). Extraneous variables constitute ones that could influence the relationship amid the independent and dependent variables in an undesirable manner (by adding error)(Canavos & Koutrouvelis, 2008), thereby affecting the outcome of an experiment while not being variables that are specifically of interest or which are specifically being examined (Hall, 1998). The chief method of causal research is experimentation (Malhotra, 2010). This notion is expanded on in the following section that details the research method adopted in this work.

Otherwise stated, causal research is utilized to ascertain evidence of cause-and-effect relationships (Malhotra, 2010). It enables the researcher to establish the essence of the relationship amid the causal and consequence variables to be envisaged (Malhotra, 2010). Lastly, causal research employs a relatively controlled environment wherein the other variables that could influence the dependent variable are governed or regulated (controlled) as far as possible (Malhotra, 2010). The influence of this

manipulation on one or more dependent variables is subsequently measured to infer causality (Malhotra, 2010).

This study adopts a conclusive research design, exploring casual relationships. Justification deeming this appropriate arose from four key factors. Firstly, this research tests set hypotheses. Secondly, it will make use of an experiment to test these. Thirdly, this practise is in alignment with extant literature (Frieden, 2013; Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013). Lastly, this research aims to establish cause-and-effect relationships.

Specifically, this work explores several independent variables (gender identity, self-concept, product category and gender of parent brand) and their influence on individuals' evaluation of an androgynous brand extension (evaluation being the dependent variable consisting of 6 assessment aspects to be addressed in subsequent sections). Having outlined the research design of the study, it is necessary to now address the research method employed.

4.3 RESEARCH METHOD

Experimentation is the chief method employed in causal designs, and is the method assumed in this work. This practise is in alignment with prior comparable brand extension studies (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Ahluwalia & Gürhan-Canli, 2000; Broniarczyk & Alba, 1994; Klink & Smith, 2001; Park & Kim, 2001; Park *et al.*, 1991 as cited by Ulrich, 2013). Thus, experimentation is now discussed.

4.3.1 Experimental Design as Part of Casual Research

Experimental designs can be categorised as one of four designs: pre-experimental, true experimental, quasi-experimental or statistical (Malhotra, 2010). *Pre-experimental designs* do not utilize randomization methods to control for extraneous factors (Malhotra, 2010). Illustrations of this design type can be observed in the One-Shot Case Study, One-Group Pre-Test-Post-Test, and the Static Group (Malhotra, 2010). *True experimental designs* involve the researcher randomly allocating test units and treatments to experimental groups (Shadish, Cook & Campbell, 2002). Illustrations of this category of experimental design include: the Pre-Test-Post-Test Control Group Design, the Post-Test-Only Control Group and the Solomon Four-Group design (Malhotra, 2010). *Quasi-experimental designs* occur where the researcher cannot completely manipulate scheduling or the allocation of treatments to test units but can still employ parts of the structure of true experimentation (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010). Two of these designs include: Time Series and Multiple Time Series (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010). A *statistical design* consists of a sequence of experiments that allow for statistical control, as well as the examination of external variables (Malhotra, 2010). Statistical designs are classified in accordance to their characteristics and use (Shadish *et al.*, 2002), with the most widely employed

statistical designs being: the randomized block design, the Latin Square and the factorial design (Shadish *et al.*, 2002).

4.3.2 Experimental Design Utilized in this Study

As a result of three key advantages, these being: the capability of investigating the influence of more than one independent variable, the ability to statistically control for particular extraneous variables, as well as being able to devise economical designs when each test unit is evaluated more than once (Malhotra, 2010), this study employs a *statistical design*. The three most widely employed statistical designs include: randomized block design, the Latin square design and the factorial design. A brief summary of each is now offered before expanding on the particular statistical design adopted in this study.

A randomized block design is advantageous where there is only one key external variable that may affect the dependent variable (Malhotra, 2010). However, they are restricted in this sense. Thus, in situations where more than one variable needs to be controlled for, as is the case with this study, Latin square or factorial designs must be utilized (Malhotra, 2010). A Latin square design enables the statistical control of two non-interacting external variables, as well the controlling of the independent variable (Malhotra, 2010). A Latin square is conceptualized as a table, with the rows and columns signifying the blocks in the two external variables (Malhotra, 2010). The levels of the independent variable are consequently allocated to the cells in the table (Malhotra, 2010). Each level of the independent variable must only emerge once in each row and each column (Malhotra, 2010). A factorial design is utilized to compute the influence of two or more independent variables at numerous levels (Malhotra, 2010).

This study adopts a 2 (product category type: functional vs. symbolic) x 2 (gender of the parent brand: masculine or feminine) factorial design. The use of such a design is consistent with approaches adopted in similar brand extension literature (e.g. Frieden, 2013; Jung & Lee, 2006; Kliamenakis, 2011). Furthermore, this framework facilitates the investigation of the influence of two or more independent variables at numerous levels (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010). A major benefit of a factorial design is its ability to allow greater generalizability of findings as compared to single-way designs (Howell, 2010). A further advantage of these designs is their efficacy regarding the utilization of experimental subjects: fewer such subjects are required as compared to alternate designs to sustain the identical level of statistical power (Wu & Hamada, 2000 as cited by Collins *et al.*, 2014). Consequently, the adoption of this design was deemed appropriate. Figure 2 offers a graphical depiction of the factorial design assumed in this study.

Figure 2: Factorial Design of the Study

		Gender of Brand	
		M → A	F → A
Product Category	Symbolic	n=60	n=60
	Functional	n=60	n=60

Factorial designs contain a cell for all feasible combinations of treatment variables (Malhotra, 2010). Respondents are then randomly chosen and randomly allocated to each cell with respondents in each cell being exposed to a particular treatment combination (Malhotra, 2010). As observable in the figure above, there are 4 treatments in this study. Respondents were randomly assigned such that the amount of respondents exposed to each treatment was equal (n=60). This is discussed in more detail in the sample size discussion later (section 4.4.1.2). The design comprised of two original parent genders (masculine (M) and feminine (F)) that extended to an androgynous brand extension (A); and two product category types: symbolic and functional.

The preceding sections of this chapter presented the particular research design and research method of this work. Particularly, it presented various possible designs and methods respectively, proceeded to report the employed design and method, and justified the employment of these. Specifically, this work comprises of conclusive research, adopting a causal approach that utilizes an experiment and a statistical design. This statistical design comprises of a factorial design structure. Particularly, a 2 x 2 factorial design.

Having outlined the research approach and design, the next chief concern is that of the target population and sampling.

4.4 TARGET POPULATION

A target population can be classified as the compilation of elements or objects that possess the information pursued by the researcher (Malhotra, 2010). The target population of this study consists of Generation Y university students. The employment of students as participants in research is typical in brand extension investigations (Chen & Liu, 2004; Grohmann, 2009; Jung & Lee, 2006; Martinez & Chernatony, 2004; Monga & John, 2010; Park *et al.*, 1991 as cited by Frieden, 2013), as well as those that explore gender identity (Frieden, 2013; Ye & Robertson, 2012) and gendered brands and products (Azar, 2013; Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Jung & Lee, 2006).

Generation Y individuals are born between 1977 and 1995 (Heaney, 2007). Additionally, Generation Y is an age cohort second in size only to the Baby Boomers, and is an attractive market segment of substantial marketing significance (Fugate & Philips, 2010). In fact, Generation Y is regarded as an age group that will reconstruct the market place in every life phase that it enters, as a result of its magnitude and spending power (Morton, 2002). As such, it is prudent for marketers to understand these consumers so as to capitalize on them (O'Halloran, 2008). Companies can then establish lasting relationships with these individuals (O'Halloran, 2008). Failing to reach this vital group could significantly jeopardize a company (O'Halloran, 2008). These factors expose the initial attractiveness of ascertaining a superior comprehension of Generation Y individuals' behaviours, for marketing managers to later utilize this insight as an input in decision-making. Further reasons that solidify this target population as the appropriate choice follow.

Generation Y has grown up in an era where brand consumption is not merely the act of purchasing, but rather a means of self-expression (Backwell & Mitchell, 2003). Additionally, as compared to other generations, Generation Y is more engrossed in negotiating their gender identity and pursuing the expression of their preferred sexuality (Abrams, 2003; Brown, 1999; Gilligan, 1982). They are also the trendsetters, whom even older generations model themselves after (Weiss, 2003). Furthermore, these individuals are regarded as the most highly educated and culturally diverse age cohort in history (Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001). Due to this generation's culturally accepting nature (Morton, 2002; Paul, 2001), as well as its atypical upbringing, its perception of product gender should be of interest to both researchers and practitioners (Fugate & Philips, 2010).

Further, this generation is unlikely to exhibit conventional gender-oriented consumption behaviour (Fugate & Philips, 2010). Moreover, one in four Generation Y individuals are raised in single parent households, exposing them to parents exhibiting non-traditional role behaviour (Fugate & Philips, 2010). The emergence of the dual worker household has also resulted in many individuals having to relinquish conventional roles (Fugate & Philips, 2010). This has exposed Generation Y

individuals to males performing feminine activities and vice versa (Fugate & Philips, 2010). As a result of this, Generation Y individuals are likely to challenge previously rigid gender stereotypes and gender roles. As such, they no longer accept the antiquated roles of the male as the “breadwinner” and the female as the “housekeeper”. In fact, biological sex has ceased to dictate roles and attitudes that individuals should exhibit (Chang, 2006). Instead, these postmodern consumers utilize brands and products to define and express themselves (Kuester *et al.*, 2007; Kleine *et al.*, 1995; Sengupta *et al.*, 2002; Wernerfelt, 1990). Furthermore, the workplace has noted a significant increase in women assuming stronger, more dominant positions with acquiescent male colleagues (Fugate & Philips, 2010). This is noteworthy as a significant portion of an individual’s self identity is derived from occupational identity (Fugate & Philips, 2010).

This transformation of gender roles and self-identity will transfer into these individuals’ consumption behaviour. It is, therefore, significant to marketers. As a result of the aforementioned factors, Generation Y individuals characterize the postmodern consumer described in the preceding theory chapters. As such, they may desire less gender congruence with products they consume. This warrants an exploration of their behaviours, so as to ascertain a more sound understanding of this segment. Additionally, with them being such a vital market segment, and one of such a significant size, insight concerning them is rendered highly relevant to marketers.

Having both identified and justified the target population of the study, it is necessary to address the sampling considerations of the work.

4.4.1 Sample Design

Sampling has been acknowledged as being an integral element of a research design (Malhotra, 2010). It entails the selection of a portion of the entire number of units of interest to decision makers with the final intention being to deduce broad conclusions concerning the total body of units (Berndt & Petzer, 2011; Parasuraman, Grewal & Krishnan, 2004; Salkind, 2010).

As it is almost always impossible to measure all individuals in a population (both in terms of time and cost), a researcher must usually draw a sub-group of elements from the population (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). This is referred to as a sample (Berndt & Petzer, 2011; Lavrakas, 2008). Conclusions drawn from the sample can then be deduced about the population to realize the research objective (Sanders, Lewis, Thornhill, 2007). Sampling details, particularly the sampling procedure and sample size of the work is now addressed.

4.4.1.1 Sampling Procedure

Sampling procedures can be generally categorized as nonprobability or probability sampling (Berndt & Petzer, 2011; Malhotra, 2010).

Nonprobability sampling depends on the personal discernment of the researcher, and not chance, to choose the sample elements (Malhotra, 2010). The researcher can randomly or intentionally resolve what elements to include in the sample (Malhotra, 2010). While nonprobability samples may generate sound estimates of the population traits, they do not allow for objective assessment of the accuracy of the sample results (Malhotra, 2010). As there is no manner of resolving the probability of choosing any specific element for inclusion in the sample, the estimates acquired are not statistically projectable to the population (Malhotra, 2010).

With *probability sampling*, conversely, sampling units are chosen by chance (Malhotra, 2010). The researcher can accurately pre-specify every possible sample of a specified size that could be derived from the population, in addition to the likelihood of choosing each sample (Malhotra, 2010). As sample elements are chosen by chance, it is possible to deduce the accuracy of the sample estimates of the traits of concern (Malhotra, 2010). Confidence intervals, which include the true population value with a specified degree of certitude, can be quantified (Malhotra, 2010). This enables the researcher to make deductions or forecasts concerning the target population from which the sample was derived (Malhotra, 2010).

Despite the fact that inferable findings are favourable, the attainment of such a large and representative sample was not achievable. Firstly, a list of all students was not accessible. Secondly, there were time and budgetary limitations connected to this research. However, comparable studies have employed nonprobability, convenience sampling procedures, utilizing students in their research (e.g. Azar, 2013; Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Grohmann, 2009; Jung & Lee, 2006; Monga & John, 2010; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Thus, it was deemed appropriate to assume a nonprobability sampling procedure in this study. Particularly, undergraduate university students at UCT were utilized. In an effort to confirm that the final realised sample reflected that of the target population, quota controls (specifically: sex and age) were additionally utilized to confirm particular control traits were observed. Such established quota controls can, in some circumstances, achieve conditions very similar to such that would be realized through the utilization of probability sampling (Malhotra, 2010). After the quotas have been established, convenience sampling was used to sample respondents.

The utilization of students has repeatedly been referred to as convenience sampling (Malhotra, 2010), with these sampling units being accessible, easily assessed and compliant (Malhotra, 2010). Despite the fact that it is desirable to adopt a technique that might facilitate more inferable findings, as noted before, most research that examines gender identity, gendered brands and brand extensions employs student samples (e.g. Azar, 2013; Frieden, 2013; Jung & Lee, 2006; Ye & Robertson, 2012). In fact, studies that developed scales to assess gendered brand image also employed student samples (e.g. Grohmann, 2009). Additionally, while student convenience

samples can accompany certain disadvantages, they can possess certain significant advantages that justify such a sample's adequacy (Fugate & Phillips, 2010). In addition to previous studies having adopted such a sample, university students as compared to non-university students have been exposed to a broader diversity of media sources (Fugate & Phillips, 2010). Such sources have been acknowledged as being a fundamental source of gender identity formation (Fugate & Phillips, 2010). Given that gender identity is a central aspect of this study, this was worth nothing.

Therefore, as a result of comparable studies employment, the aforementioned budgetary and time constraints, as well as not having access to a list of students, nonprobability, quota sampling was considered adequate and utilized in this study. Having addressed the sampling procedural concerns of this work, the next salient sample consideration, namely that of sample size, is now addressed.

4.4.1.2 Sample Size

The manner of defining the number of elements to be included in a sample can be complicated, involving numerous considerations. Such considerations can include the convolution of the model as well as the sample size utilized in similar studies and departures (Malhotra, 2010).

In looking to similar studies (specifically: Azar, 2013, Jung & Lee, 2006; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012), final sample sizes ranged from 150 to 240 participants. In keeping along these lines, this work aimed to realize a final sample of a minimum of 240 respondents, such that each quadrant depicted in Figure 2 would consist of 60 respondents so as to facilitate a sound comparison between each "segment" (see section 4.3.2). Further, within this frame, approximately equal representation of each gender identity segment, within each cell, was realised. Having outlined the sample size considerations of the study, the forthcoming section sets forth the measurement of the study's key constructs.

4.5. MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Measurement is the procedure that entails numbers being assigned to constructs through indicators that enable statistical analysis of the ensuing data (Malhotra, 2010). Definition of this study's chief constructs is (and should invariably be) predominantly founded upon theoretical rationale to fortify the integrity of the research output as it depends on formerly validated and reliable scales (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle & Mena, 2012). In keeping with this, this work implements such established scales in the measurement of its constructs.

The study employs a questionnaire, with 4 treatments, to evaluate all constructs. Prior to providing details regarding the questionnaire, the selection of the specific product categories and gendered brands employed in each treatment are detailed. The last part

of this measurement section presents the specific scales employed to measure each construct.

4.5.1 Selection of Product Categories and Brands

The selection of gendered brands and product categories utilized in the work is a salient concern and, consequently, must be addressed. In so doing, this discussion adheres to a dichotomized framework: addressing the selection of the product category and gendered brands separately. Details concerning the former are depicted first.

This study employed product categories and gendered brands that have been identified in existing literature. This was deemed appropriate for numerous reasons. Firstly, the applicable studies conducted several rounds of pretesting to ensure that the selected categories were, indeed, perceived as being either functional or symbolic (product categories); or as masculine or feminine (perceived gendered brand image). This was then reaffirmed in the actual study wherein the questionnaire employed in the research included manipulation checks in this regard. Secondly, these studies also employed student samples, and as such, respondent perceptions are expected to be similar. Further, these studies have been conducted recently so individuals' perceptions are not expected to have altered drastically. Lastly, this study reaffirmed that both product category and gendered perceptions were in agreement with prior studies. It did so initially through a pre-test (addressed more fully in the next section), and then again via the inclusion of a manipulation check in the final study. This is consistent with prior literature (e.g. Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013).

Accordingly, the specific brands and categories selected for inclusion were expected to be sound. Prior to noting the *specific* gendered brands and categories selected, it is necessary to document certain key findings regarding such concerns in extant literature that triggered these selections. In keeping with the aforementioned dichotomized structure mentioned previously, product category selection is addressed first.

4.5.1.1 Product Category Selection

In depicting the product categories selected to represent the symbolic (or hedonistic) and functional (or utilitarian) categories in this work, it is, as noted previously, necessary to explore perceptions located in extant literature. In an endeavour to provide this information in such a manner that assists the readability of this section, three tables presenting the final findings concerning product category perception (or classification) in existing literature are presented below.

Particularly, Tables 1, 2 and 3 graphically portray the perceived functionality and symbolism associated with various examined product types. In certain instances,

researchers' main intentions extended beyond only category definition. As such, for these studies, only the categorization of *employed* categories is provided. Where this occurs, however, products can be understood to have possessed the highest respective levels of functionality and symbolism out of all the examined categories. The presentation of these findings is according to the authors whom conducted the work. As such, Jung and Lee's (2006) product category classification is presented first in Table 1 below. The findings are depicted in such a manner that the various assessed categories are presented, their respective classification is forwarded as well as the authors whom conducted the investigation.

Table 1: Jung and Lee (2006) Product Category Classification

Initial Product Category List	Source	Selected Categories	Categorization
Alcoholic beverages	Jung & Lee, 2006	Fashion	Symbolic
Deodorants			
Fashion			
Fragrance			
Hair gel/ spray			
Magazines			
Shampoo		Hair gel/ spray	Functional
Shower gels			
Skincare			
Swimwear			
Tobacco			
Underwear			

As observable above, Jung and Lee (2006) explored 12 product categories, selecting fashion as the symbolic category and hair gel/spray as the functional one. Aaker's (1997) product category classification is depicted next, in Table 2.

Table 2: Aaker (1997) Product Category Classification

Product Category	Source	Classification
Clothing Cosmetics Fragrance	Aaker, 1997	Symbolic
Film Pain Relievers Toothpaste		Functional
Computers Soft Drinks Shoes		Both

As observable above, Aaker (1997) examined 9 product categories, classifying 3 (clothing, cosmetics and fragrance) as symbolic, 3 (film, pain relievers, toothpaste) as functional and 3 (computers soft drinks, shoes) as both symbolic and functional. The classifications categorized by Babin, Darden and Griffin, (1994), Batra and Ahtola (1991) and Crowley, Spangenberg and Hughes (1992), as recognized by Plakoyiannaki and Zotos (2008) is now graphically depicted below in Table 3.

Table 3: Further Product Category Classifications Located in Babin, *et al.*, (1994), Batra and Ahtola, (1991) and Crowley *et al.*, (1992)

Product Category	Classification	Source
Apparel	Symbolic	Babin, Darden & Griffin, 1994; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Crowley, Spangenberg & Hughes, 1992
Auto and related products		
Cosmetics		
High-tech devices		
Jewellery		
Movies and entertainment		
Recreation and travel	Functional	as cited by Plakoyiannaki & Zotos, 2008
Financial services		
Food and drinks		
Home appliances		
Household items (e.g. Cleaning detergents)		

Personal hygiene		
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SOURCE: Plakoyiannaki & Zotos, 2008

Additional product category classification conducted by Babin, Darden and Griffin, (1994), Batra and Ahtola (1991) and Crowley, Spangenberg and Hughes (1992) was presented in Table 3. As notable in this Table, 12 categories were explored, with apparel, auto and related products, cosmetics, high-tech devices, jewellery, movies and entertainment and recreation and travel being categorized as symbolic product categories. Financial services, food and drinks, home appliances, household items and personal hygiene items were classified as belonging to the functional product category.

Having explored these classifications, fashion (also referred to as clothing or apparel) has been consistently reaffirmed as being perceived as being a symbolic category (Aaker, 1997; Babin *et al.*, 1994; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Crowley *et al.*, 1992; Jung & Lee, 2006;). As such, fashion was selected to be the symbolic product category in this work. In a similar line, personal hygiene has been asserted as being perceived as a functional category (Babin *et al.*, 1994; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Crowley *et al.*, 1992; Jung & Lee, 2006). Specifically, within this line, deodorant was selected as the functional product category to be utilized in this work. As mentioned previously, the choice of these particular categories to function as the symbolic and functional categories was confirmed via a pre-test and verified within the main study itself. Again, as noted earlier, this pre-test is addressed more comprehensively in successive sections of this chapter.

Having explored the selection of product categories for the study, and in adhering to the aforementioned dichotomous framework, the next concern pertains to the selection of gendered brands.

4.5.1.2 Gendered Parent Brand Selection

Numerous studies have explored product gender (e.g. Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Ulrich, 2013). However, the preceding theory chapters of this work exposed the elevated relevance of exploring brand gender and not product gender. As such, only perceived gendered *brand* image is attended to here. Following the same approach employed previously, an overview of brand classification in leading gendered brand extension studies is provided in Table 4. Again, as with the selection of product categories, it was considered appropriate to select gendered brands from extant literature as these gendered brand perceptions had been extensively tested by each of the authors. Additionally, the gendered perceptions of the employed sample in this work would be assessed in both the pre-test and the main study, facilitating its verification. The classification of brands in extant literature (according to their perceived gendered image), as noted above, follows below in Table 6. The presentation of these brands

and their classification is such that the first 10 feminine brands are depicted first, followed by 7 brands that were classified as being perceived as being masculine in the literature. The source of each study wherein this brand classification was noted accompanies this portrayal.

Table 4: Gendered Brand Classification in Extant Literature

Brand	Classification	Source
Aubade	Feminine	Veg & Nyeck, 2007
Carita		Ulrich, 2013
Cartier		Veg & Nyeck, 2007
Chanel		Veg & Nyeck, 2007; Jung & Lee, 2006
Clinique		Kliamenakis, 2011
Helena Rubinstein		Ulrich, 2013
Lancôme		Veg & Nyeck, 2007
Secret		Frieden, 2013
Sifone		Jung & Lee, 2006
SKYY Vodka		Robbie & Neale, 2012
Audemars Piguet	Masculine	Veg & Nyeck, 2007
Gatzby		Jung & Lee, 2006
HUGO BOSS		Veg & Nyeck, 2007; Kliamenakis, 2011; Jung & Lee, 2006
Montblanc		Veg & Nyeck, 2007
Old Spice		Frieden, 2013
Rolex		Veg & Nyeck, 2007
SMIRNOFF		Robbie & Neale, 2012

An overview of the classification of gendered brands in existing literature was presented via the graphical presentation of brands in Table 4. Observing this depiction, it is evident that HUGO BOSS is repeatedly perceived as being a masculine brand (Jung & Lee, 2006; Kliamenakis, 2011; Veg & Nyeck, 2007). As such, HUGO BOSS was selected as the masculine parent brand in the study. Likewise, Chanel has been reaffirmed as being feminine (Jung & Lee, 2006; Veg & Nyeck, 2007). Consequently, it is selected as the feminine brand for the study. Both of these brands will fall within the symbolic category of fashion. This is consistent with comparable studies (e.g. Jung & Lee, 2006). Androgynous brand extensions were deemed viable for both of these brands, as each brand has recently targeted the opposite sex (Collins, 2012; Leyfield, 2014; Menkes, 2014).

With respect to the gendered brands within the functional category, specifically within the deodorant range, there is an absence of academic literature that has

explored gendered brands in this category (with the exception of Frieden, 2013). Looking to what appears to be the most masculine and feminine deodorant brands available on the market here in South Africa (following an overview of media sources and corporate brand description), Axe is selected as the masculine brand, and Dove as the feminine one. The reason for this choice is now expanded on.

Axe has been repeatedly referred to as being masculine in the media and by corporate entities (Bapna, 2012; Hoffman, 2010; Santos, 2013; Unilever, 2014; Waikar, 2012). Likewise, Dove has been acknowledged as being feminine (Unilever, 2014; Waikar, 2012). Further, their appropriateness as being parent brands that can facilitate an androgynous brand extension was displayed through evidence of each of these brands recently attempting to target the opposite sex (i.e. AXE now targeting women and Dove now targeting men)(Cliffs, 2013; Eleftheriou-Smith, 2012; Unilever, 2014). As mentioned previously, the gendered perceptions of these brands were checked in the pre-test and the main study.

The above section exposed the selected product categories (clothing and deodorant) and gendered brands (Hugo Boss, Chanel, AXE and Dove). Details regarding the questionnaire are now discussed.

4.5.2 Questionnaire Design and Layout

The questionnaire employed to ascertain the data is presented in Appendix A. Respondents were randomly exposed to 1 of 4 treatments in accordance with each of the quadrants depicted in Figure 2 (section 4.3.2). Thus, treatments differed in terms of the product category or specific gendered brand that they exposed the respondent to. Specifically, two treatments presented the respondent with a functional category. Each of these comprised of either a masculine or feminine parent brand. The other two treatments presented the respondent with a symbolic product category, with one comprising of a masculine parent brand and the other a feminine parent brand.

With regards to the layout of the questionnaire, it initiated with a filter question that enquired whether the respondent was familiar with the brand. It was imperative that the respondent was familiar with the brand as subsequent questions probed respondents' attitudes towards this brand, potential purchase intentions and gendered brand image perceptions. Familiarity was also important given that the androgynous brand extension they would be exposed to later in the questionnaire assumed knowledge of the original parent brand. Where respondents were not familiar with the brand, they did not need to continue with the questionnaire. A section that evaluated each respondent's gender identity followed the filter question.

Respondents were initially exposed to the originally masculine or feminine gendered parent brand via a hypothetical scenario (hereafter referred to as the control scenario). Following this, they were exposed to a second scenario that presented them with the

androgynous brand extension. This before-after structure was assumed in order to be able to properly compare evaluations of the extension with evaluations of the original brand (Mitchell & Jolley, 1996). The use of scenarios, as well as the employment of actual brands and hypothetical brand extensions is in alignment with prior studies (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Barrett, Lye & Venkateswarlu, 1999; Gail, 1993; Han & Schmitt, 1996; Kirmani, Sood & Bridges, 1999; Park *et al.* 1996; Sunde & Brode, 1993; Ulrich, 2013).

As mentioned above, the respondents were exposed to scenarios. In creating the specific copy to be utilized in both the control and extension scenarios, existing literature (e.g. Frieden, 2013; Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013) and industry examples of unisex advertisements (e.g. Murray-Browne, 2012; Newman, 2013; Stampfer, 2013) were consulted. The particular copy employed in both the control and androgynous extension scenarios (masculine to androgynous [M → A] and feminine to androgynous [F → A] within each category) is presented below in Table 5 and Table 6 respectively. In alignment with past literature, the copy included in the questionnaire presented the respondents with a scenario rather than an advertisement (Ahluwalia, 2008; Jung & Lee, 2006; Klink & Smith, 2001; Ulrich, 2013). Ulrich (2013) noted that contemporary research favours this approach as it is less vague and leads to better results.

Questions facilitating the examination of all remaining key constructs followed. These are discussed in more depth later. Regarding the control scenario these included: attitude towards the brand, brand preference and purchase intent. Concerning the androgynous brand extension these constituted: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the brand extension, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), brand preference and purchase intent.

Lastly, demographic details were enquired in the questionnaire, concerning each respondent's biological sex and age.

As noted above, Table 5 depicts the copy employed for the control scenarios that exposed the respondent to the masculine or feminine parent brand in each of the two product categories.

Table 5: Copy Used In Control Scenarios

Treatment:	Copy Employed:
1. Symbolic Category – Masculine Parent Brand (HUGO BOSS)	<p>“HUGO BOSS is a successful, high-end fashion brand created for men.</p> <p>Its range consists of: tailored clothing, casual or sportswear and shoes and accessories.</p>

	<p>Specific items from each range include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Swimwear</i> • <i>T-Shirts</i> • <i>Suits</i> • <i>Dress Shirts</i> • <i>Jackets</i> • <i>Coats</i> • <i>Watches & Sunglasses</i> • <i>Scarves</i> • <i>Gloves</i> <p>”</p>
2. Symbolic Category – Feminine Parent Brand (Chanel)	<p>“Chanel is a successful, high-end fashion brand created for women.</p> <p>Its range consists of tailored clothing, casual wear and accessories.</p> <p>Specific items from each range include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Suits</i> • <i>Shirts</i> • <i>Jackets</i> • <i>Dresses & Skirts</i> • <i>Coats</i> • <i>Watches & Sunglasses</i> • <i>Scarves</i> • <i>Gloves</i> <p>”</p>
3. Functional category – Masculine Parent Brand (AXE)	<p>“AXE is a renowned, leading brand in the deodorant category, created for men.</p> <p>AXE provides men with 24-hour odour-protection.</p> <p>*Dermalogically tested. *Hypoallergenic *Moisturizing agent</p> <p>”</p>

4. Functional category – Feminine Parent brand (Dove)	<p>“Dove is a leading brand within the deodorant category, created for women.</p> <p>Dove provides women with 24-hour odour-protection.</p> <p>*Dermalogically tested. *Hypoallergenic *Moisturizing agent</p> <p>”</p>
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The copy included in the control scenarios that feature each of the gendered parent brands, in each respective product category, was depicted above in Table 5. The copy included in the androgynous brand extension treatments is now illustrated below in Table 6.

Table 6: Copy Included in Each Extension Treatment

Treatment:	Copy Employed:
1: Symbolic M → A	<p>“Expanding on its expertise and success as a high-end fashion label for men, HUGO BOSS introduces:</p> <p><i>A new unisex clothing range!</i></p> <p>Some items from this range include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scarves - Gloves - Shirts - Jackets - Jerseys <p>”</p>
2. Symbolic F → A	<p>“Expanding on its expertise and success as a high-end fashion brand for women, CHANEL introduces:</p> <p><i>A new unisex clothing line!</i></p> <p>Some items from this range include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scarves - Gloves - Shirts - Jackets - Jerseys

	”
3. Functional M → A	<p>“Building on strong expertise and success in the deodorant product range for men, AXE introduces:</p> <p><i>A new unisex deodorant!</i></p> <p>The new formula, available in 4 new scents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blocks odours and reduces sweat - Leaves no patches on clothing - Hypoallergenic - Is dermalogically tested and approved - Includes a moisturizing and soothing agent <p>”</p>
4. Functional F → A	<p>“Building on strong expertise and success in the deodorant product range for females, DOVE introduces:</p> <p><i>A new unisex deodorant!</i></p> <p>The new formula, available in 4 new scents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blocks odours and reduces sweat - Leaves no patches on clothing - Hypoallergenic - Is dermalogically tested and approved - Includes a moisturizing and soothing agent <p>”</p>

Table 6 portrayed the copy presented to respondents with respect to the extensions they were exposed to. As such, the questionnaire design and layout concerns have been addressed. It is now necessary to expand on the particular measures adopted in this work.

4.5.3 Measures

Measurement entails the allotment of numbers or other symbols to traits of objects in accordance to particular predetermined rules (Malhotra, 2010). As noted previously, definition of this work’s chief constructs is, and should inevitably be, predominantly centred on theoretical rationale to fortify the integrity of the research output as it is contingent on formerly validated and reliable scales (Hair *et al.*, 2012).

4.5.3.1 Gender Identity

Gender identity is assessed using the Barak and Stern's (1986) scale that is an abridged version of the BSRI (Bem Sex Role Inventory) (Bem, 1974). This scale was developed in a consumer behaviour context and has been shown to be more reliable than other scales in the consumer research environment (Palan, 2001). Furthermore, this shortened form has been found to generate more reliable scores than the longer, 60-item version (Palan, 2001). It has also exhibited higher internal consistency (Holt & Ellis, 1998).

The scale consists of 10 feminine items and 10 masculine items, with the two scales representing orthogonal constructs (Ye & Robertson, 2012). Feminine items comprise of: affectionate, loyal, tender, sensitive to others' needs, sympathetic, compassionate, eager to soothe hurt feelings, understanding, warm, gentle. Masculine items include: has leadership abilities, willing to take a stand, ambitious, competitive, dominant, assertive, has a strong personality, forceful, acts like a leader, aggressive.

Respondents rate themselves on a 7-point scale according to the masculine and feminine items that were anchored by "never or almost never true/ always or almost always true", with the items being placed randomly. Classification levels (i.e. high or low) is according to a median-split procedure, with a score higher than the median split figure being classified as high, and lower as low. Respondents are classified as masculine (having a high masculine score, low feminine score), feminine (high feminine score, low masculine score), androgynous (high masculine score, high feminine score) or undifferentiated (low masculine score, low feminine score).

4.5.3.2 Self-Concept

Ideal and actual self-concept congruity was measured according to Rhee and Johnson's (2012) scale. The scale is centred on work done by Sirgy *et al.* (1997); as well as Sontag and Lee (2004). The scale consists of four statements that pertain to the ideal self, and five that pertain to actual self. Respondents rate statements on a 7-point scale, anchored by "strongly disagree/ strongly agree". Ideal self statements include: "This brand is similar to me", "This brand is not consistent with how I see myself" (negatively coded), "I do not feel a close personal connection to this brand" (negatively coded) and "This brand is not very much like me" (negatively coded). Actual self statements include: "I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand", "This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be", "I often use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am", "This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself" and "I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand".

Measurement concerns for all the independent variables employed in this work have been addressed. The discussion now turns to the dependent variable, detailing the measurement specifics regarding brand evaluation.

4.5.3.3 Brand Extension Evaluation

The employed brand evaluation scales examine the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension in a brand extension-specific context as deemed appropriate in the literature (Jung & Lee, 2006; Friden, 2013). Six key dimensions comprise brand extension evaluation: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the brand extension, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), brand preference and purchase intent.

- **Perception of Overall Fit**

Perception of overall fit was evaluated with four 5-point scales adapted from Bhat and Reddy (1997), anchored by “not at all true/ very true”. Degrees of agreement were measured with four statements: “The introduction makes sense”, “The extension seems logical”, “The extension would be a good example of the brand” and “The extension would be typical of the brand” (Bhat & Reddy, 1997). The measures adopted to assess individuals’ perceptions of brand image fit are addressed next.

- **Perception of Brand Image fit**

Perception of brand image fit was measured through seven items adapted from Bhat and Reddy (1997). The items are evaluated on a 5-point scale, with the anchors “not at all true/ very true”. These items assess generic dimensions of brand image fit and both symbolic and functional concept consistency. The image fit of the brand is evaluated with four statements: “The extension fits my ideas”, “The extension fits my image”, “The extension has a similar image to me” and “The extension conveys similar impressions to me” (Bhat & Reddy, 1997). Symbolic concept consistency is assessed via two statements: “The user of the extension is as stylish as the user of the parent brand” and “The extension makes the same statements about users as the parent brand” (Bhat & Reddy, 1997). “The extension is as practical as the parent brand” (Bhat & Reddy, 1997) assesses functional concept consistency. The measures adopted to examine individuals’ attitude towards the parent brand following the introduction of the extension are now presented.

- **Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)**

Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) was evaluated via three, 7-point semantic differential scales adopted from Frieden (2013): “negative/positive”, “dislike/like”, “unfavourable/favourable”. The measures utilized to evaluate

individuals' attitudes concerning the androgynous brand extension itself are documented next.

- **Attitude towards the brand extension**

Attitude towards the brand extension was evaluated via the same three, 7-point semantic differential scales adopted from Frieden (2013): “negative/positive”, “dislike/like”, “unfavourable/favourable”. The practise of employing the same scales to assess attitude towards the brand extension and the original brand post-extension is consistent with an array of prior studies (e.g. Jung & Lee, 2006; Frieden, 2013; Ulrich, 2013).

- **Brand Preference**

Brand preference was assessed via two, 7-point semantic differential scales adapted from Sirgy *et al.* (1997) and Grohmann (2009): “very poor/very good”, and “very unsatisfactory/ very satisfactory”. Purchase intent, the final measure utilized to assess brand evaluation is now set forth.

- **Purchase Intent**

Purchase intent was measured with two, 5-point scales also adapted from Grohmann (2009) and Sirgy *et al.* (1997). Respondents rate the probability of conducting a future purchase according to two semantic differential scales: “unlikely/ likely” and “improbable/probable” (Grohmann, 2009; Sirgy *et al.*, 1997).

As observable above, the items that investigate brand evaluation do so in a brand *extension* context. Naturally, where brand evaluation is investigated in the control, or parent brand, scenario certain brand extension-specific items were not included. Thus, “perception of overall fit”, “perception of brand image fit” and “attitude towards the brand post extension” were not employed as brand evaluation dimensions in this case. Thus, brand evaluation regarding the parent brand comprised of: attitude towards the brand, brand preference and purchase intent (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Prior to the development of the final questionnaire, a pre-test was conducted to verify the employed measures.

4.5.4 Measurement Item Pre-Test

Pre-tests enable the researcher to recognize potential complications with survey items or data collection. It involves the gathering of data from a rather limited number of respondents utilizing the data collection techniques stipulated for the study. The pre-test sample should preferably be drawn from the study's sampling frame (Gallagher, 2004).

A pre-test was conducted on a convenience sample of 30 ($n = 30$) respondents. The practise served as a preliminary examination of the scale items in the form of both internal consistency analysis (Cronbach Alpha) and confirmatory factor analysis, following Azjen's (2011) direction.

Further, the pre-test enabled the testing of: the flow of the questionnaire, the verification of selected product categories (in terms of respondents' perceptions of the employed categories being symbolic or functional), the perceived gender of the brands featured in the scenarios, and lastly that the gendered brands within each product category possesses similar (i.e. not statistically different) levels of familiarity and attitude towards the brand so as to facilitate a fair comparison between them.

Most saliently, none of the measures necessitated changing. The results of the pre-test served to deliver preliminary evidence of the appropriate standard of the scales. Furthermore, the test affirmed the choice of the particular gendered brands and product categories both in terms of their perceived gendered image and perceived levels of functionality or symbolism respectively. Lastly, equivalent levels of familiarity and attitude were observed between the product category types and the gendered brands. Thus, the pre-test also provided preliminary evidence of suitably selected product categories and gendered brands.

Having addressed the salient measurement concerns of the study, this discussion now addresses the data collection and preparation concerns of this work.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION AND PREPARATION

This discussion will begin by addressing the data *collection* procedure, and then proceed to attend to data *preparation* of the study.

4.6.1 Data Collection

Prior to data collection, permission to do so was ascertained from the University of Cape Town (UCT) Ethics Faculty Committee. The particular form completed and permission grant letter is featured in Appendix B.

Questionnaires were distributed to university students that were completing their first, second or third year of a Bachelor of Business Sciences degree at UCT. Respondents were informed that participation was entirely voluntary, that they could withdraw at any time, that their responses would remain confidential and anonymous and that there were no right or wrong answers. Further, they were informed that questionnaire completion would take no longer than 10 – 15 minutes to complete.

As detailed in the questionnaire layout section, respondents were exposed to two scenarios: a control one featuring the masculine or feminine parent brand; and one

that featured an androgynous brand extension, and asked to complete the accompanying questions. Each respondent was randomly assigned to 1 of 4 treatments. As such, all participants had an equal likelihood of being assigned to each treatment. Within the functional category, the two treatments involved: a masculine to androgynous extension and a feminine to androgynous extension. The same was conducted within the symbolic category.

4.6.2 Data Preparation

Data preparation is a vital facet of research, with insufficient thoughtfulness towards it significantly undermining the ensuing statistical analysis and findings (Malhotra, 2010). Data preparation typically adheres to a specific process (Malhotra, 2010). This process is initiated by checking for satisfactory questionnaires, and followed by editing, coding and transcribing the data (Malhotra, 2010). In response to this, this work performed a process of data preparation on the attained data so as to amplify its precision. Particularly, this procedure comprised of appraising the completeness of responses as well as amending where logical inconsistencies, absent values or out-of-range responses existed and abandoning unsatisfactory responses. However, as a result of the fixed-alternative and semantic differential scales employed in this work, such inconsistencies were not expected to be a significant concern.

The process was directed via a combination of Microsoft Excel and IBM'S SPSS 20. Once data has been collected and prepared, it is typically then statistically analysed (Malhotra, 2010). As such, having verified the acceptability of the raw data, it was subsequently analysed, testing hypotheses. Accordingly, the following section addresses the statistical analyses concerns of the study.

4.7 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical analyses were conducted in a two-fold manner: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were directed so as to investigate the suitability of the final achieved sample in comparison to the target population detailed earlier. Further, it facilitated insight into the gender identity segment representation of the sample. The age distribution was also ascertained. Then, inferential statistics via the utilization of t-tests, ANOVA, linear regression and moderated multiple regression (MMR) was assumed in an endeavour to support or reject the hypothesis posited in the antecedent theory chapters.

4.7.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics function to encapsulate and explain a set of data in an evident and succinct fashion (Malhotra, 2010; Pallant, 2013). This work observed descriptive statistics at two levels. Firstly, the sample was examined with regard to relative frequencies of respondents' age and sex characteristics that served to appraise the suitability of the attained sample. Secondly, in an endeavour to comprehend both the

central tendency and spread of the data, the mean and standard deviation of each chief construct was examined. The particular frequencies and figures are presented in the forthcoming chapter. The inferential statistics of the work are now set forth.

4.7.2 Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics, in contrast to descriptive statistics, test hypotheses at a specified level of confidence and infer conclusions from the sample to the population (Black, 2012; Crow, 2006; Zikmund, 2006). They establish the probability of certain traits of the population being based on the traits of the sample (Rowntree, 1981). Further, they facilitate the deduction of statistical generalizations concerning elements of the social world (Gayle, 2000). They also assist in evaluating the strength of the relationship amid your independent (causal) variables and your dependent (effect) variables. As hypotheses are central to inferential statistics, they will now be expanded upon.

Hypotheses are typically phrased so as to attend one of four kinds of statistical problems (Malhotra, 2010). Firstly, a hypothesis can postulate an anticipated dissimilarity amid groups of respondents concerning a specific variable of relevance (Malhotra, 2010). Secondly, hypotheses can postulate anticipated dissimilarities on two or more measures inside the identical group of respondents (Malhotra, 2010). Thirdly, hypotheses can posit a value of specific measure (Malhotra, 2010). Lastly, hypotheses can postulate stipulated connections or interactions amid constructs (Malhotra, 2010). This work is most aligned with the first, second and final sort of hypotheses.

With respect to the first type, this work examines possible dissimilarities between each aspect of evaluation for different product categories, gender identity segments and gendered brands. Independent sample t-tests were employed to test possible dissimilarities between gendered brand and product category groups (Pallant, 2013). This statistical technique assumes normality and an absence of outliers (Malhotra, 2010). Thus, if the data violated this assumption and was, thus, not suitable for parametric testing, the non-parametric alternative, the Kruskal-Wallis Test (Pallant, 2013) was to be utilized. ANOVA was employed to test possible dissimilarities between the four gender identity segments (Pallant, 2013). This statistical technique, again, assumes normality and an absence of outliers (Malhotra, 2010). If the data violated these assumptions, the non-parametric alternative, namely the Mann-Whitney U Test (Pallant, 2013) would be employed. Lastly, linear regression was employed to investigate which aspect of self-concept (actual or ideal) exerted a stronger influence on brand extension evaluation (Pallant, 2013). This statistical technique makes certain assumptions, including: normality, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, linearity and outliers (Pallant, 2013). If the data violated these assumptions, the data would be transformed by applying a logarithmic, reciprocal or power transformation (Poole & O'Farrell, 1970).

Concerning the second type of hypotheses, paired sample t-tests were used to test differences in brand evaluation between the masculine or feminine parent brand and the androgynous brand extension that occurred between the same group of respondents (Malhotra, 2010; Pallant, 2013; Stone, 2010). This statistical technique assumes normality and an absence of outliers (Malhotra, 2010). If the data violated this assumption and was, therefore, not suitable for parametric testing, the non-parametric alternative, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test (Pallant, 2013) was to be used.

Regarding the last hypothesis type, the study postulated that self-concept would a) influence brand extension evaluation and b) moderate the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. With respect to the former, linear regression was employed. Regarding the latter, the investigation considered several variables simultaneously, and thus a multivariate statistical analysis technique was necessitated. Multiple-linear regression was considered appropriate to perform this task, specifically moderated multiple regression (MMR)(Aguinis & Gottfredson, 2010).

A summary of the particular hypotheses being tested and the specific statistical analyses utilized to conduct this is provided in Table 7 below. Following this, each statistical analysis is discussed individually, motivating its employment in this work.

Table 7: Hypotheses and Corresponding Statistical Analyses

HYPOTHESIS	TEST UTILIZED
<p><i>H_{1A}: Gender identity influences the evaluation* of the androgynous extension (AE)</i></p> <p>*each individually:</p> <p>a) overall fit [H_{1A1}] b) image fit [H_{1A2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H_{1A3}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H_{1A4}] e) brand preference [H_{1A5}] f) purchase intent [H_{1A6}]</p>	ANOVA
<p><i>H_{1B}: Masculine individuals will exhibit less favourable evaluations* of the AE as compared to androgynous individuals</i></p> <p>i.e. less favourable:</p> <p>a) overall fit [H_{1B1}] b) image fit [H_{1B2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H_{1B3}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H_{1B4}]</p>	ANOVA

e) brand preference [H _{1B5}] f) purchase intent [H _{1B6}]	
<p>H_{1C}: <i>Feminine</i> individuals will exhibit <i>less favourable</i> evaluations of the AE as compared to <i>androgynous</i> individuals</p> <p>i.e. less favourable:</p> <p>a) overall fit [H_{1C1}] b) image fit [H_{1C2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H_{1C3}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H_{1C4}] e) brand preference [H_{1C5}] f) purchase intent [H_{1C6}]</p>	ANOVA
<p>H_{1D}: <i>Androgynous</i> individuals will exhibit <i>more favourable</i> evaluations of the AE as compared to <i>masculine/ feminine/ undifferentiated</i> individuals</p> <p>i.e. more favourable:</p> <p>a) overall fit [H_{1D1}] b) image fit [H_{1D2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H_{1CD}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H_{1D4}] e) brand preference [H_{1D5}] f) purchase intent [H_{1D6}]</p>	ANOVA
<p>H_{1E}: <i>Undifferentiated</i> individuals will exhibit <i>less favourable</i> evaluations of the AE as compared to <i>androgynous</i> individuals</p> <p>i.e. less favourable:</p> <p>a) overall fit [H_{1E1}] b) image fit [H_{1E2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H_{1ED}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H_{1E4}] e) brand preference [H_{1E5}] f) purchase intent [H_{1E6}]</p>	ANOVA
H _{2A} : Self-concept influences the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension	Linear Regression

a) overall fit [H _{2A1}] b) image fit [H _{2A2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H _{2A3}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H _{2A4}] e) brand preference [H _{2A5}] f) purchase intent [H _{2A6}]	
H _{2B} : <i>Ideal</i> self-concept exerts a stronger influence on the evaluation of the AE than <i>actual</i> self-concept a) overall fit [H _{2B1}] b) image fit [H _{2B2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H _{2B3}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H _{2B4}] e) brand preference [H _{2B5}] f) purchase intent [H _{2B6}]	Linear Regression
H _{2C} : Self-concept moderates the gender identity gendered brand relationship outcome in terms of extension evaluation a) overall fit [H _{2C1}] b) image fit [H _{2C2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H _{2C3}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H _{2C4}] e) brand preference [H _{2C5}] f) purchase intent [H _{2C6}]	Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR)
H _{3A} : The AE implemented in the <i>symbolic</i> product category received more favourable evaluations than the one implemented in the <i>functional</i> category a) overall fit [H _{3A1}] b) image fit [H _{3A2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H _{3A3}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H _{3A4}] e) brand preference [H _{3A5}] f) purchase intent [H _{3A6}]	Independent Sample T-Test
H _{4A} : The AE that extended from a <i>masculine</i> parent brand received more favourable evaluations than the one that extended from the <i>feminine</i> parent brand i.e. more favourable:	Independent Sample T-Test

a) overall fit [H _{4A1}] b) image fit [H _{4A2}] c) attitude towards the extension [H _{4A3}] d) attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) [H _{4A4}] e) brand preference [H _{4A5}] f) purchase intent [H _{4A6}]	
H _{5A} : Individuals evaluate the androgynous brand extension more favourably than the masculine/ feminine parent brand *i.e. more favourable: a) attitude towards the brand [H _{5A1}] b) brand preference [H _{5A2}] c) purchase intent [H _{5A3}]	Paired Sample T-Test

Table 7 served to provide an overview of the hypotheses that guide the research and the particular tests that were used to uphold or reject these posited hypotheses. As observed, four key statistical techniques are employed in this work, namely: ANOVA, t-tests, linear regression and MMR. Each of these statistical analyses is now addressed more fully, with the discussion being initiated with a section addressing t-tests.

4.7.2.1 T-Tests

A parametric test delivers deductions for formulating statements concerning the means of parent populations (Malhotra, 2010). A t-test is typically utilized for this intention (Malhotra, 2010). The two most widely employed t-tests are an independent samples t-test and a paired samples t-test. The former is employed when a research wants to compare the mean scores of two different groups of respondents or conditions (Pallant, 2013). The latter is used when an investigator desires to compare the mean scores of the same group of respondents on two different occasions, or when matched pairs exist (Pallant, 2013; Park, 2009). As observed in Table 7, both independent samples t-tests and paired samples T-test were employed in this study.

When comparing the two product categories and the two parent brand genders in terms of brand extension evaluation, independent samples t-test were utilized. This was deemed appropriate, as the groups that are being compared were *different* (Pallant, 2013). Furthermore, its use to compare product categories and gendered brands within a brand extension context has been confirmed (Jung & Lee, 2006).

When comparing the brand evaluation responses that were exhibited for the masculine or feminine parent brand with those demonstrated towards the androgynous brand,

paired samples t-test was considered appropriate. This was as a result of the two groups that were being compared being the *same* group of respondents according to matched pairs of evaluation dimensions (Pallant, 2013; Park, 2009).

As noted above, a t-test is utilized when attempting to examine differences between (or comparing the means of) two groups. However, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) must be used when a researcher wants to compare more than two groups (Pallant, 2013; Park, 2009).

4.7.2.2 ANOVA

ANOVA is a statistical procedure for investigating the differences between means for two or more populations (Malhotra, 2010; Pallant, 2013; Park, 2009). This technique is employed to investigate differences in the evaluation scores of the androgynous brand extension by the four gender identity segments. The specific hypotheses that this process was utilized to test are depicted in Table 7. Conducting ANOVAs to investigate and compare evaluation-type outcomes is in line with comparable studies (Frieden, 2013; Ulrich, 2013).

4.7.2.3 Regression

Regression analysis is a procedure that aims to determine the manner in which certain variables are initiated or caused, with its objectives being both scientific explanation and forecasting (Jupp, 2006). When the form of the relationship amid variables has been quantified and is understood to be casual to another variable, it is possible to forecast (or predict) the value of that caused variable (Jupp, 2006). The relationship amid independent and dependent variables is signified via a regression equation (Jupp, 2006). In the most basic case of a linear relationship amid two continuous variables, this equation is denoted as:

$$Y = a + bX \tag{1}$$

With the Y being the value of the dependent variable, X of the independent variable, a the value Y has when X is zero and b the extent Y alters when X alters by one unit (Jupp, 2006).

Regression analysis is a strong and adaptable method for investigating associative relationships amid a metric dependent variable and one or more independent variables (Malhotra, 2010). It can be utilized in various manners, including: to establish if the independent variables elucidate a significant change in the dependent variable (i.e. if a relationship exists), to establish how much of the change in the dependent variable can be elucidated by the independent variable (i.e. the strength of the relationship), to establish the framework or arrangement of the relationship (i.e. the mathematical equation concerning the variables), to forecast the values of the dependent variables,

and control for other independent variables when assessing the influences of a particular variable or set of variables (Malhotra, 2010).

As evident in Table 7, regression is utilized to investigate self-concept's influence on brand extension evaluation. The use of regression in this manner is in alignment with an abundance of studies that examine self-concept (Rhee & Johnson, 2012). However, the potential moderating effect of self-concept on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation was also investigated. As previously established, given that this work entails the assessment of several independent variables, multiple regression analysis was deemed appropriate. In particular, this study uses multiple moderated regression (MMR).

- **Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR)**

While the bulk of researchers are acquainted with the investigation and interpretation of interaction effects in factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA), where interactions are amid categorical independent variables, many are unaware that these interaction effects in ANOVA are a unique illustration of interaction effects in multiple regression that can be processed in a similar manner (Baguley, 2007). A typical, but inappropriate manner of handling interaction effects amid continuous independent variables is to transform them into categorical variables (via a median split or otherwise) (Baguley, 2007). A superior method that possesses more statistical power and is more explanatory is to insert interaction effects to a multiple regression model, referred to as moderated multiple regression (MMR) (Baguley, 2007).

In fact, moderated multiple regression has been extensively adopted to investigate the interaction or moderating influence in behavior and comparable social sciences fields (Sheih, 2009, 2010). As noted earlier, chief constructs in this work originated in such social science disciplines (self-concept, gender identity), and this work, indeed, assesses behaviours. Additionally, it is widely assumed in management and psychology research, with moderated analysis persisting as a vital research method (Sheih, 2009, 2010).

When assessing whether self-concept moderates the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation, the following procedure was adhered to. Firstly, an interaction term was created between gender identity and each aspect of self-concept (i.e. actual and ideal self-concept). In order to prove moderation, these interaction terms should be significant when a relationship between the interaction and brand extension evaluation is tested for via regression. In order to complete the understanding of MMR, a discussion about moderators follows.

- **Moderators**

Moderation infers that the causal relation amid two variables alters as a result of the moderator variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The statistical analysis must investigate the differential influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable as a result of the moderator (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Moderator research generally possesses a larger interest in the predictor variable as compared to mediator research (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Further, the moderator explanation of the relation amid the stressor and control generally involves an experimental manipulation of control as a method to ascertain independence amid a stressor and control as a dimension of the environment distinct from the stressor (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Within a correlational analysis structure, a moderator could be described as a third variable that influences the “zero-order correlation” amid two other variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986: 1174). Furthermore, moderator variables stipulate when particular influences will occur (Baron & Kenny, 1986). A moderating effect can also be referred to as an interaction (Hayes & Preacher, 2013). Hypotheses containing multiplicative interaction or moderation influences are typical in social sciences literature (Preacher, Curran & Bauer, 2006) where certain constructs within this work (i.e. gender identity and self-concept) hail from.

A summary of the contents presented in this methodology chapter is now provided.

4.8. CONCLUSION

This chapter served to outline the methodological concerns of this work. Specifically, it initiated with an introduction section that outlined the trajectory it would follow in the presentation of its contents. Following this, it detailed the research design adopted. Particularly, it noted that the work employed a quantitative research method, with a causal design. The discussion then addressed the research method concerns of the work, explaining that within this casual design, it employed an experiment, with the study design consisting of a 2 x 2 factorial design. The target population concerns were then addressed. Specifically, this chapter detailed that Generation Y, university students were the target population of the work, as a result of their constant identity fabrication focus and their anticipated consumption behaviours being unconventional; and with this translating into their buying behaviours. The sampling specifics were then addressed, specifically the sampling procedure and sample size adopted in this study, with these being convenience sampling and 240 minimum respondents respectively.

The measurement instrument was then addressed via five key sections, namely: the selection of product categories and gendered parent brands, the questionnaire design and layout, the specific measures utilized to assess each construct, and then, lastly, a section addressing the conducted pre-test. The discussion then focused on the data collection and preparation of the work, establishing that data was collected via the distribution of questionnaires during undergraduate lectures, and prepared via the utilization of Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS 20. Lastly, this chapter addressed the

statistical analysis concerns of the work via a dichotomous structure that attended to the descriptive and influential statistics respectively. With regards to the former, biological sex and age details were gathered from respondents. The latter stated that t-tests, linear regression, moderated multiple regression and analysis of variance were adopted. In order to depict which tests were utilized for which specific purposes, Table 7 presented a summary of the particular test adopted to test which hypothesis. This chapter concluded with a summary of the various sections contained within it, highlighting key details presented in each. As such, all methodological concerns of the study have been addressed. The specific results ascertained via these methodological procedures, and concerning the specific sample, are presented in the forthcoming results chapter.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter set forth the methodology of this study. Included in this methodology chapter was a discussion detailing the factorial design and convenience sampling (with quota controls) adopted. Additionally, a clear articulation of the target population, namely Generation Y individuals, was forwarded. Furthermore, the scenario approach employed and data collection procedure as well as the specific product categories and gendered brands selected were set forth. In closing, the antecedent chapter identified and motivated the data analysis techniques of ANOVA, t-tests, linear regression and moderated multiple regression (MMR) as the inferential statistical approaches utilized to empirically test postulated theoretical relationships.

This chapter serves to present the results of the descriptive and inferential statistical analyses conducted. First, a brief summary of this study's hypotheses is offered for ease of reference. Following this, the final resultant sample size and its characteristics are discussed so as to evaluate its suitability relative to the target population and sample size outlined in the previous chapter. The section that follows this reports relevant descriptive statistics associated with each key construct of this work. The chapter then concludes by reporting the results of the aforementioned data analysis techniques that tested proposed relationships.

5.2 SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES

Theoretical grounding for each of the hypothesized relationships was presented in Chapter 2 and 3. The central relationship of this work is that between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. It was theorised that congruency between gender identity and the androgynous brand extension (AE) would result in positive extension evaluation. Thus, androgynous individuals were posited to exhibit higher evaluation scores for the androgynous brand extension, as compared to masculine, feminine and undifferentiated individuals. Thus, it was formally postulated that:

H_{1A}: Gender identity influences the evaluation of the androgynous extension (AE)

Furthermore:

H_{1B}: Masculine individuals will exhibit less favourable evaluations of the AE as compared to androgynous individuals

H_{1C}: Feminine individuals will exhibit less favourable evaluations of the AE as compared to androgynous individuals

H_{1D}: Androgynous individuals will exhibit more favourable evaluations of the AE as compared to masculine/ feminine/ undifferentiated individuals

H_{1E}: Undifferentiated individuals will exhibit less favourable evaluations of the AE as compared to androgynous individuals

Extending the examination of identity and its influence on brand extension evaluation, it was theorised that self-concept would affect brand extension evaluation. Particularly, ideal self-concept was expected to exert a greater influence on evaluation than actual self-concept. It was also anticipated that self-concept would moderate the relationship between gender identity and evaluation. Thus, it was formally anticipated that:

H_{2A}: Self-concept influences the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension

Furthermore, that:

H_{2B}: Ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on the evaluation of the AE than actual self-concept

And lastly:

H_{2C}: Self-concept moderates the gender identity gendered brand relationship outcome in terms of extension evaluation

It was theorised that the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension would be affected by the product category wherein the extension was implemented. Particularly, it was anticipated that the extension introduced within the symbolic product category would witness more favourable brand extension evaluations than the functional category. Formally:

H_{3A}: The AE implemented in the symbolic product category received more favourable evaluations than the one implemented in the functional category

Likewise, an androgynous brand extension implemented from an originally masculine brand, as compared to one introduced from an originally feminine brand was posited to receive more positive brand extension evaluations. This was theorised as a result of society's comparative preference for masculine traits and the comparative rejection of feminine ones. Thus, it was put forth that:

H_{4A}: The AE that extended from a masculine parent brand received more favourable evaluations than the one that extended from the feminine parent brand

Given that an androgynous brand is unique in that it possesses a high co-presence of both masculinity and femininity, it was expected that individuals would evaluate such an extension differently from the manner in which they evaluate the masculine or feminine parent brand. Thus, it was formally anticipated that:

H_{5A}: Individuals evaluate the androgynous brand extension differently to the manner in which they evaluate the masculine/feminine parent brand

The remainder of this chapter sets forth the results of the statistical analyses conducted in order to support or reject the aforementioned reinstated hypotheses. Prior to the presentation of these descriptive and inferential results is a section that addresses the fieldwork conducted and final realised sample.

5.3 FIELDWORK

Prior to the commencement of data collection, necessary permission was obtained from the University of Cape Town Commerce Faculty Ethics Committee to proceed with data collection (see Appendix B). Once such permission was secured, fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the procedures outlined in the preceding methodology chapter. Self-administered questionnaires were administered at lecture venues at UCT. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the four treatments (see Appendix A).

A filter, as noted previously, was employed such that individuals had to be aware of the original brand. Furthermore, individuals were informed that the questionnaire would take a maximum of 15 minutes to complete, that all answers would remain anonymous and confidential, that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point. The final realised sample size is now discussed.

5.4 SAMPLE SIZE

The total number of respondents that completed the survey was $n=300$. Following data preparation, 12 respondents' responses were deemed incomplete and were consequently removed from the final dataset. A final sample size of $n=288$ was ultimately realised.

The realised sample size was deemed sufficient to proceed with statistical analysis. This decision was motivated by two key considerations. Firstly, the sample size exceeds the minimum requirements to conduct the aforementioned statistical techniques. Secondly, the realised sample size is in line with, indeed exceeds, that of

comparable studies (e.g. Azar, 2013, Jung & Lee, 2006; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012).

5.5 BRAND GENDER AND PRODUCT CATEGORY VERIFICATION

Although employing a factorial design facilitates a certain amount of control (Malhotra, 2010) and while the respective product categories and gendered brands were selected following an extensive literature review (depicted in section 4.5.1), it was necessary to ensure certain traits were observed regarding the selected gendered brands and product categories in this study. Particularly, it was necessary that the employed masculine and feminine brands in the study were perceived by the final resultant sample to be *masculine* and *feminine*. Likewise, it was necessary to confirm that the products employed to signify the symbolic and functional categories were, indeed, perceived by the final realised sample to be *symbolic* and *functional*. This practise is in line with comparable prior works and has been deemed crucial even when a factorial design is employed (Jung & Lee, 2006; Kliamenakis, 2011; Ulrich, 2013). The results of this investigation are now set forth.

5.5.1 Brand Gender Verification

It was necessary to check that the brands employed were, indeed, perceived as being feminine or masculine as intended by the final realised sample. In order to assess this, Grohmann's (2009) gendered personality scale was employed. Individuals rated the brand in accordance with 12 adjectives (6 weighted masculine and 6 weighted feminine). Respondents were asked how well each of the adjectives described the brand on a 7-point Likert scale, anchored by "Not at all" and "Very much". The *masculine* weighted items included: adventurous, aggressive, brave, daring, dominant and sturdy. Together these items comprised the masculine brand personality (MBP). The *feminine* weighted items comprised: expresses tender feelings, fragile, graceful, sensitive, sweet and tender (Grohmann, 2009). These feminine weighted items comprised the feminine brand personality (FBP). In line with prior works, a mean score above the midpoint of 4 was considered "high" and below 4 as being "low" (Kliamenakis, 2011). Thus, a brand perceived as being *masculine* must score *above* 4 on the MBP and *below* 4 on the FBP. Both the FBP and MBP demonstrated suitable reliability ($\alpha=0.94$ and $\alpha=0.91$ respectively) far exceeding the prescribed minimum thresholds (Malhotra, 2010).

The brands employed in this study included: HUGO BOSS, Chanel, AXE and Dove. As mentioned previously, following a thorough analysis of gendered brand perceptions in the literature (see section 4.5.1), HUGO BOSS and AXE were selected as being the *masculine* brands and Chanel and Dove were employed as the *feminine* brands. The sample's gendered perceptions of these brands were examined in order to

assess if they were perceived as such. Table 8 summarises the mean values for both the MBP and FBP for all of the brands.

Table 8: Gendered Brand Personality Classification

Brand	MBP	FBP	Classification	Correctly Employed?
HUGO BOSS	4.80	2.70	Masculine	✓
Chanel	3.61	4.76	Feminine	✓
AXE	5.15	2.32	Masculine	✓
Dove	2.62	5.54	Feminine	✓

As observed in Table 8 above, the employed masculine brands, HUGO BOSS and AXE both received high MBP (M= 4.80, 5.15) and low FBP (M= 2.70, 2.32) ratings. Thus, the sample perceived both of these brands to be highly *masculine*, and to possess low levels of femininity, as was intentioned. They were thus correctly employed to denote masculine brands in the study. Chanel and Dove, the two employed feminine brands received high FBP (M= 4.76, 5.54) and low MBP (M= 3.61, 2.62) ratings. Therefore, these brands were perceived by the realised sample as possessing high levels of *femininity* and low levels of masculinity, and were thus correctly employed in this study to represent the *feminine* parent brands from which the androgynous brand extension could be introduced. As all four of these brands were chosen after reviewing prior literature, it can also be deduced that the sample's gendered perceptions are in line with extant literature (Jung & Lee, 2006; Kliamenakis, 2011; Veg & Nyeck, 2007).

The product category confirmation is addressed next.

5.5.2 Product Category Verification

It was necessary to examine whether the product categories selected to represent the symbolic and functional categories in the study were, indeed, perceived to be symbolic and functional by the final realised sample (Jung & Lee, 2006). This study employed clothing to denote the symbolic product category and deodorant to represent the functional category. This selection followed a thorough examination of existing perceptions in the literature (presented in section 4.5.1) (Aaker, 1997; Babin *et al.*, 1994; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Crowley *et al.*, 1992; Jung & Lee, 2006).

Respondent's perceived levels of symbolism and functionality of the employed categories were assessed via four items rated on 7-point scales, anchored by "strongly agree/ disagree" (adapted from Chang, 2006). Particularly, respondents rate their

agreement with four statements, namely: “When I purchase [product category]: I take product functions into consideration/ I take product quality into consideration/ I consider whether or not the product fits my image/ I consider whether or not the product will catch others’ attention”. To further confirm that products were accurately classified as symbolic or functional, respondents assessed the degree of functionality (“not at all functional/ very functional”) and the prestige (“not at all prestigious/ very prestigious”) on a 7-point bipolar scale (adapted from Grohmann, 2009). Thus, three items assessed the perceived functionality of the category, and three items assessed the perceived symbolism. The reliability of the scales was deemed adequate, with the items assessing symbolism and functionality exhibiting satisfactory Cronbach Alpha scores ($\alpha=0.65$ and $\alpha=0.60$ respectively) (Malhotra, 2010).

Potential differences between perceived symbolism and functionality levels were assessed for the two product categories. This was tested for using independent samples T-tests. The results are summarised in Table 9 below and discussed thereafter.

Table 9: Differences in Perceived Functionality and Symbolism

	Test Employed	Means for each group	<i>t</i>	Mean diff.	P- Valu e	Sig?	Categ.
Product Functionality	Independe nt	S= 4.36 F= 5.27	9.02	0.91	0.00	✓	Functional
Product Symbolism	Samples T-Tests	S= 4.89 F= 3.56	10.25	1.33	0.00	✓	Symbolic

As observed in Table 9, between the two product categories, statistically different levels of perceived functionality and symbolism were observed (p-value =0.00, 0.00; t-stat= 9.02; 10.25). Moreover, regarding the employed functional product category, higher levels of functionality were observed, as compared to perceived symbolism (M= 5.27 vs. 4.36). Concerning the symbolic product category, higher levels of symbolism were observed, as compared to perceived functionality (M= 4.89 vs. 3.56). Thus, the employed categories were, indeed, perceived by the realised sample in the intended fashion. Both categories possessed significantly different levels of functionality or symbolism in the envisioned manner. Furthermore, the sample’s product categorisations are consistent with existing literature (Aaker, 1997; Babin *et al.*, 1994; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Crowley *et al.*, 1992; Jung & Lee, 2006).

Having verified that the brands and product categories employed in this work were, indeed, perceived as intended by the final resultant sample, the descriptive and inferential statistics are now delivered.

5.6 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

In order to assess sample suitability the descriptive statistics that summarize its broad characteristics are now presented and discussed. Thereafter, appropriate descriptive statistics for each of this study's central constructs are offered.

5.6.1 SAMPLE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The preceding methodology chapter (see section 4.3) defined the target population for this study as Generation Y individuals, especially those that are university students. This decision was motivated by a series of key considerations. Firstly, these individuals possess unique brand and product gender perceptions and are thus unlikely to exhibit conventional gender-oriented consumption behaviours. Secondly, these individuals perceive consumption to be a means of self-expression. Third, comparable brand extension, gender identity and gendered brand and product studies employ Generation Y individuals. Lastly, this age cohort is substantial in size and is an attractive segment for marketers.

To decipher the extent to which the final realised sample is reflective of this, the sample's broad characteristics are presented here. The relevant sample descriptive statistics are summarised in Table 10, which presents the total number of responses (n) alongside corresponding frequencies.

In terms of demographics, the final sample consisted of 33% (n=95) male respondents and 65.3 % (n=188) female respondents. A total of 1.7 % (n=5) respondents preferred not to disclose their gender. In terms of age, all respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25. A total of 0.7% (n=2) of respondents indicated that they were 18 years old, with 11.8 % (n =34), 27.8% (n=80), 21.9% (n=63) and 15.6% (n=45) indicating that they were 19, 20, 21 and 22 years respectively. A total of 7.3 % (n=21), 4.9 % (n=14) and 10.1% (n=29) indicated that they were 23, 24 and 25 years of age respectively. It is worth mentioning that the unequal gender distribution of the sample does not in any way influence this study as gender yields no influence on gender identity and was deemed irrelevant in the scope of this work (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Robbie & Neale, 2012).

Table 10: Sample Characteristics

N		%
Gender		
Male	95	33
Female	188	65.3
Prefer not to answer	5	1.7
Age		

18	2	0.7
19	34	11.8
20	80	27.8
21	63	21.9
22	45	15.6
23	21	7.3
24	14	4.9
25	29	10.1

Given these descriptive statistics, it was concluded that the sample was suitably aligned with the defined target population and furthermore is appropriate for the gender identity gendered brand context of this study. Further descriptive statistics, namely those that pertain to key constructs are now discussed.

5.6.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR KEY CONSTRUCTS

All key constructs were measured on seven-point or five-point Likert-type scales resulting in interval scaled data (see section 4.5.3). Consequently, the appropriate descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviations are presented below in Table 11 for all constructs except gender identity, which is addressed individually thereafter. Afterwards, each key construct is addressed prior to the presentation of inferential statistics.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics for Key Constructs

	Type of Scale Used	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cronbach Alpha
CONTROL				
Actual Self-Concept	7 point Likert Scale	3.77	1.55	0.82
Ideal Self-Concept	7 point Likert Scale	2.61	1.56	0.93
Attitude Towards the Brand	7 point Likert Scale	4.14	0.98	0.83
Brand Preference	7 point Likert Scale	5.23	1.08	0.80
Purchase Intent	7 point Likert Scale	4.44	1.92	0.91
EXTENSION				
Actual Self-Concept	7 point Likert Scale	3.83	1.55	0.88
Ideal Self-Concept	7 point Likert Scale	2.71	1.53	0.94
Perception of Overall Fit	5 point Likert Scale	3.26	0.94	0.86
Perception of Brand Image Fit	5 point Likert Scale	2.85	0.95	0.91
Attitude Towards the Extension	7 point Likert Scale	4.73	1.67	0.97
Attitude Towards the Original Brand (Post-Extension)	7 point Likert Scale	4.95	1.40	0.90

Brand Preference	7 point Likert Scale	4.83	1.47	0.96
Purchase Intent	7 point Likert Scale	4.44	1.92	0.91

The control, as mentioned previously, refers to the original masculine or feminine parent brand (see section 4.5.2). It was necessary to distinguish between the original brand and the brand extension so that aspects regarding each could be compared later on.

5.6.2.1 SELF-CONCEPT

Actual and Ideal Self-Concept were operationalized as the summated scales of items 38 to 41 and items 42 – 46 respectively for the control; and items 61 – 64 and 65 – 69 for the extension. All scale items were 7-point Likert-type scales anchored by 1= Strongly Disagree and 7= Strongly Agree. Higher scores demonstrate high levels of perceived congruency between the brand and the individual's perception of him or herself as they are in the present (Actual Self-Concept) and their ideal version of themselves (Ideal Self-Concept).

The summated scales demonstrated suitable internal consistency for both the actual (4 items) and ideal self-concept (5 items) scales with $\alpha = 0.82$ and $\alpha = 0.93$ respectively for the control. Suitable internal consistency was also demonstrated by these scales with respect to the extension with $\alpha = 0.88$ and $\alpha = 0.94$ respectively. For the extension, principal components factor analysis revealed one factor for ideal self-concept with this factor (Eigenvalue= 4.04) explaining 80.73% of the variance in the data. With regards to actual self-concept, one factor was revealed (Eigenvalue= 2.96) explaining 74% of the variance in the data. For the control, factor analysis exposed one factor for ideal self (Eigenvalue= 3.88), explaining 77.52% of the variance in the data. For actual self-concept, one factor was also exposed, (Eigenvalue= 2.64) explaining 65.88% of the variance in the data.

As a result, Actual Self-Concept was operationalized as items 38 to 41; and items 61 to 64 for the control and the brand extension respectively. Similarly, Ideal Self-Concept was operationalized as items 42 to 46 (control) and 65 to 69 (extension).

- **Control Group**

Consideration of the mean value for Actual Self-Concept (with regards to the control) indicates that individuals generally displayed a slightly below neutral ($M = 3.77$) perception of congruency amid their notion of themselves in the present and the original brand. This means that individuals generally perceived the image of the parent brand to be slightly dissimilar to their perception of self in the present. However, respondents were not unanimous in this regard, with a notable spread of responses ($SD = 1.55$). Therefore, certain individuals either perceived there to be high

or low levels of congruency between their idea of self and the image of the brand. Examination of the mean value for Ideal Self-Concept signifies that individuals generally exhibited low levels of perceived congruence amid their notion of self and the brand's image ($M = 2.61$). This means that individuals generally perceived the image of the brand to be quite dissimilar to their idealised notion of self. However, a notable spread of responses was observed ($SD = 1.56$). Thus, individuals either perceived there to be low or slightly above neutral levels of congruency amid their ideal notion of self and the parent brand's image. The mean values of Actual and Ideal Self-Concept with respect to the androgynous brand extension are now discussed.

- **Androgynous Brand Extension**

Examination of the means with respect to congruency with the extension indicates that individuals perceived almost neutral levels of congruency with the androgynous brand extension and the Actual Self ($M = 3.83$), and rather low levels of congruency with the extension and the Ideal Self ($M = 2.71$). With respect to the former, respondents were, however, not unanimous with there being a notable spread of responses ($SD = 1.55$). Thus, individuals either perceived there to be low levels or slightly above neutral levels of congruence with their notion of self in the present and the extension's image. Assessment of the mean value for Ideal Self-Concept, as noted above, denotes that individuals generally perceived there to be low levels of congruency amid their ideal notion of self and the androgynous brand's image ($M = 2.71$). This means that individuals in general did not perceive themselves (in idealistic terms) to be highly similar to the brand extension. Again, however, respondents were not united in this regard, with a notable spread of responses being observed ($SD = 1.53$). Therefore, individuals perceived relatively low or slightly high levels of congruence amid their ideal notion of self and the extension's image.

5.6.2.2. BRAND EVALUATION

Brand evaluation for the control consisted of three dimensions of evaluation, namely: attitude towards the brand, brand preference and purchase intent. Each of these is now discussed in turn. The six dimensions that comprise brand extension evaluation are addressed thereafter.

- **Control Group's Brand Evaluation**

As outlined earlier (section 4.5.3.3), brand evaluation for the control group comprised of three aspects of evaluation: attitude towards the brand, brand preference and purchase intent.

i. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE BRAND

Attitude towards the brand was operationalized as the summated scales of items 52, 54 and 56. All items were 7-point Likert-type scales. The first scale item was anchored by 1= Very bad and 7 = Very good. The second and third scale items were anchored by 1= Dislike and 7 = Like; and 1=Negative and 7= Positive respectively. Higher scores indicated that the respondent possessed a favourable inclination towards the parent brand. Examination of the mean showed that there was an above neutral attitude towards the original brand ($M= 4.14$), with responses indicating a notable spread ($SD= 0.98$), demonstrating that respondents possessed either positive or negative attitudes towards the parent brand. The three item scale displayed suitable internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.83$. In the factor analysis, one factor loaded and satisfied Kaizer's criterion. This factor (Eigenvalue = 2.33) explained 77.65% of the variance of the data.

ii. BRAND PREFERENCE

Brand preference towards the control original brand was operationalized as the summated scale of items 57 and 58. Scale items were 7-point Likert-type scales anchored by 1= Very poor and 7= Very good and 1 = Very unsatisfactory and 7= Very satisfactory respectively. Higher scores demonstrated a strong preference towards the original brand. An inspection of the mean reveals a preference towards the original brand ($M=5.23$) and a slight spread of responses ($SD= 1.08$) but generally responses were favourable indicating a preference for the original brand. The two item scale displayed suitable internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.80$. In the factor analysis, one factor loaded and satisfied Kaizer's criterion. This factor (Eigenvalue = 1.91) explained 95.51 % of the variance of the data.

iii. PURCHASE INTENT

Purchase intent was operationalized as the summated scale of items 59 and 60. Scale items were 7-point Likert-type scales, anchored by 1= Very unlikely and 7= Very likely. Higher scores demonstrated strong intentions to purchase the brand. Examination of the mean revealed ($M=4.44$) a slightly above neutral aim to purchase the original brand. Responses exhibited a notable spread ($SD= 1.92$) with respondents demonstrating a comparatively non-existent or existent aim to purchase the parent brand. This two item scale demonstrated suitable internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.91$. In the factor analysis, one factor loaded, with this factor (Eigenvalue = 1.84) explaining 91.89 % of the variance of the data.

Having addressed the three items that comprised brand evaluation for the control brand, brand extension evaluation items are now addressed.

- **Brand Extension Evaluation**

As mentioned previously, brand extension evaluation consists of six dimensions, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand post-extension, brand preference and purchase intent (section 4.5.3.3). This is in contrast to the three employed to assess brand evaluation for the original parent brand. These three additional elements of evaluation arise as a result of the construct being examined in a brand extension context (Frieden, 2013; Jung & Lee, 2006). Each of these is now attended to in turn.

i. PERCEPTION OF FIT

Perception of fit was operationalized as the summated scale of items 70 to 73. All scale items were 5-point Likert-type scales anchored by 1 = Not at all true and 7 = Very true. Higher scores indicated that the respondent perceived there to be high levels of overall fit between the original parent brand and the androgynous brand extension. Examination of the mean indicates that there were almost neutral levels of overall fit perceived across all the treatments ($M = 3.26$) with responses demonstrating notable spread, indicating that respondents perceived there to be comparatively high or low levels of fit between the two brands ($SD = 0.94$). This four item scale demonstrated suitable internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.86$. In the factor analysis, one factor loaded, with this factor (Eigenvalue = 2.82) explaining 70.59% of the variance of the data.

ii. PERCEPTION OF BRAND IMAGE FIT

Perception of brand image fit was operationalized as the summated scale of items 74 to 80. All items were 5-point Likert-type scales anchored by 1 = Not at all true and 7 = Very true. Higher scores indicated that the respondent perceived there to be high levels of fit between the original parent brand's image and the androgynous brand extension's image. An examination of the mean indicates that respondents overall perceived there to be low levels of brand image fit between the two ($M = 2.85$), with responses indicating a moderate amount of spread ($SD = 0.95$). This seven item scale exhibited suitable internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.91$. In the factor analysis, one factor loaded. This factor (Eigenvalue = 4.51) explained 64.43% of the variance of the data.

iii. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE EXTENSION

Attitude towards the androgynous brand extension was operationalized as the summated scale of items 81, 83 and 85. All scale items were 7-point Likert-type scales. The three scales were anchored by 1= Bad and 7= Good; 1= Dislike and 7= Like and 1= Negative and 7= Positive respectively. Higher scores indicated that respondents had favourable attitudes towards the androgynous brand extension. Examination of the mean demonstrates an above neutral attitude towards the

extension ($M=4.73$). Responses exhibit a notable spread ($SD = 1.67$) that shows that individuals had relatively more positive or negative attitudes towards the brand extension. The 3 item scale demonstrated a satisfactory internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.91$. Further, in the factor analysis, one factor loaded. This single factor explained 93.65% of the variance of the data.

iv. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ORIGINAL BRAND (POST-EXTENSION)

Attitude towards the original parent brand (post-extension) was operationalized as the summated scale of items 82, 84 and 86. All scale items were 7-point Likert-type scales. The three scales were anchored by 1= Bad and 7= Good; 1= Dislike and 7= Like and 1= Negative and 7= Positive respectively. Higher scores indicated that respondents had positive attitudes towards the parent brand following the introduction of an androgynous extension. Examination of the mean indicates an above neutral attitude towards the parent brand following the introduction of an extension ($M=4.95$). Responses exhibit a notable spread ($SD = 1.40$) indicating that respondents had relatively more positive or negative attitudes towards the original brand post extension. The 3 item scale demonstrated a satisfactory internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.90$. Further, in the factor analysis, one factor loaded, with this factor explaining 82.83% of the variance of the data and satisfying Kaizer's criterion.

v. BRAND PREFERENCE

Brand preference was operationalized as the summated scale of items 87 and 88. The items were measured with 7-point Likert-type scales anchored by 1= Very poor and 7 = Very Good, and 1 = Very unsatisfactory and 7 = Very satisfactory respectively. Higher scores demonstrated a strong preference towards the androgynous brand extension. Inspection of the mean indicates an above neutral preference towards the extension ($M= 4.83$), with responses exhibiting a notable spread ($SD= 1.47$), demonstrating that respondents had relatively strong or weak preferences towards the extension. This two item scale demonstrated suitable internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.96$. In the factor analysis, one factor loaded, with this factor explaining 95.87 % of the variance of the data (Eigenvalue = 1.92).

vi. PURCHASE INTENT

Purchase intent was operationalized as the summated scale of items 89 and 90. Both scale items were 7-point Likert-type scales, anchored by 1= Very unlikely and 7= Very likely; and 1=Improbable and 7=Probable respectively. Higher scores indicated that respondents had high intentions to purchase the brand extension. Inspection of the mean indicates an intention to purchase the extension ($M= 4.44$), with responses exhibiting a moderate spread ($SD= 1.92$). This spread demonstrates that respondents had relatively stronger or weaker intentions to purchase the extension. This two item

scale demonstrated suitable internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.91$. In the factor analysis, one factor loaded. This single factor (Eigenvalue = 1.94) explained 96.75% of the variance of the data.

5.6.2.3. GENDER IDENTITY

Respondents rated themselves on a 7-point scale according to how true 20 adjectives weighted feminine or masculine described them. Scale items 2 to 21 were anchored by 1 = Never or Almost Never True and 7 = Always or Almost Always True. The ten feminine items comprised of: affectionate, loyal, tender, sensitive to others' needs, sympathetic, compassionate, eager to soothe hurt feelings, understanding, warm and gentle. Masculine weighted items included: has leadership abilities, willing to take a stand, ambitious, competitive, dominant, assertive, has a strong personality, forceful, acts like a leader and aggressive.

Classification of an individual's gender identity was according to a median-split procedure, with a score higher than the median split figure being classified as high and lower as low. The median for the feminine weighted adjectives was 5.2 and for the masculine items was 4.95. Respondents were then classified as masculine (having a high masculine score (above 4.95), low feminine score (below 5.2)), feminine (high feminine score (above 5.2), low masculine score (below 4.95)), androgynous (high masculine score (above 4.95), high feminine score (above 5.2)) or undifferentiated (low masculine (below 4.95) and feminine scores (below 5.2)). The descriptive statistics for the sample's gender identity frequencies are presented in Table 12 below and discussed thereafter.

Table 12: Gender Identity Distribution of Sample

Gender Identity	N	%
Masculine	55	19.1
Feminine	72	25
Androgynous	89	30.9
Undifferentiated	72	25
TOTAL	288	100

In terms of the demographics associated with gender identity, 19.1 % (n=55) individuals had a masculine gender identity, 25 % (n=72) individuals had a feminine gender identity, 30.9% (n=89) individuals had an androgynous gender identity and 25% (n=72) individuals had an undifferentiated gender identity. Thus, the majority of individuals were androgynous. This is in line with claims in the literature stating that individuals are now more likely than ever to identify as androgynous (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Kliamenakis, 2011).

The 20 item scale demonstrated suitable internal consistency with $\alpha = 0.85$. In the

factor analysis, two factors loaded and satisfied Kaizer's criterion. As such, it was operationalized as the original 20-item scale consisting of items 2 to 21.

Having addressed the descriptive statistics of this study, this chapter concludes with a presentation of the results of the inferential statistics that tested the postulated hypotheses.

5.7 INFERENCE STATISTICS

The forthcoming chapter reports the results of the various statistical analyses conducted to assess the hypotheses formerly presented for statistical testing. ANOVA, t-tests, linear regression and MMR analyses were conducted using IMB SPSS 20. Presentation and interpretation of the various hypotheses is logically preceded by an examination of the reliability and validity of all measures. To decipher that all measures demonstrated an acceptable level of reliability, reliability for the key constructs of this work are assessed via an examination of both internal consistency and indicator reliability. Thereafter, the validity is examined via demonstration of both convergent and discriminant validity.

5.7.1 RELIABILITY

The researcher's initial point of investigation is to confirm that the various scales are reliable measures of their respective constructs such that repeated measures would render consistent results (Malhotra, 2010). Internal consistency must be assessed to evaluate the reliability of the various measures.

Internal consistency of a set of measures is most commonly evaluated via an examination of Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha > 0.60$) (Malhotra, 2010). As demonstrated initially in Table 11, and reiterated in Table 13 below, all key constructs of this work exhibited acceptable levels of internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha scores in excess of the stipulated minimum thresholds.

Table 13: Reliability of the Measures

Cronbach Alpha	
CONTROL	
Actual Self-Concept	0.82
Ideal Self-Concept	0.93
Attitude towards the brand	0.83
Brand Preference	0.80
Purchase Intent	0.91
BRAND EXTENSION	
Actual Self-Concept	0.88
Ideal Self-Concept	0.94
Perception of Overall Fit	0.86

Perception of Brand Image Fit	0.91
Attitude towards the extension	0.97
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)	0.90
Brand Preference	0.96
Purchase Intent	0.91

Given the above Cronbach Alpha scores, all scales were deemed satisfactory for both the control and for the androgynous brand extension.

5.7.2 OUTCOMES OF HYPOTHESES TESTING

The statistical significance of all hypothesized relationships is now addressed. All relationships are examined at the 5% significance level. Chapter 4 (section 4.6.2) delineated the different statistical analysis techniques utilized. These included: ANOVA, independent samples t-tests, linear regression and MMR. Findings for each hypothesised relationship are presented in accordance with the key construct concerned.

5.7.2.1 GENDER IDENTITY AND BRAND EXTENSION EVALUATION

H_{1A} posited that gender identity would exert an influence on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension (see section 3.3). As brand evaluation was operationalized via six dimensions of extension evaluation, H_{1A1}, H_{1A2}, H_{1A3}, H_{1A4}, H_{1A5} and H_{1A6} posited that gender identity influenced: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent respectively. ANOVA was employed to test H_{1A1} to H_{1A6}. A summary of these results is provided in Table 14 below. The results of each hypothesised relationship follow, in turn.

Table 14: Gender Identity and Brand Extension Evaluation Findings

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	F-statistic	P-value	Significant?
Perception of overall fit	ANOVA	1.34	0.26	X
Perception of brand image fit		1.11	0.35	X
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		2.61	0.05	✓
Attitude towards the extension		2.80	0.04	✓
Brand Preference		2.63	0.05	✓
Purchase Intent		0.48	0.70	X

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

As observed above, differences were observed between the various gender identity groups and their evaluation scores. Thus, an individual's gender identity influences their evaluation of an androgynous brand extension. However, this influence only holds for certain dimensions of extension evaluation, namely: attitude towards the

original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension and brand preference. This is now discussed in more detail.

H_{1A1} was not supported at the 5% significance level (p-value = 0.26)(F= 1.34). Thus, it is concluded that gender identity does not influence perceptions of overall fit amid the parent brand and the extension. H_{1A2} was also not supported at the 5% significance level (p-value=0.35)(F=1.11). Therefore, it can be deduced that gender identity does not affect perceptions of brand image fit. H_{1A3} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value = 0.05)(F=2.61). As such, it is inferred that gender identity impacts individuals' attitudes towards the original brand post-extension. H_{1A4} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value =0.04)(F=2.80). Accordingly, it is inferred that gender identity influences individuals' attitudes towards a brand extension. H_{1A5} was upheld at the 5% significance level (p-value =0.05)(F=2.63). Consequently, it is concluded that gender identity influences brand preference. Lastly, H_{1A6} was not upheld at the 5% significance level (p-value =0.70)(F=0.48). Thus, it can be inferred that an individual's gender identity does not affect their purchase intent.

Thus, concerning the constructs of gender identity and brand extension evaluation, it was deduced that gender identity influenced attitude towards the brand extension, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), and brand preference. However, gender identity did not affect perceptions of overall or brand image fit, nor did it impact purchase intent.

In an endeavour to more fully comprehend exactly *where* the observed differences existed, a post-hoc analysis was conducted. Specifically, Tukey HSD was utilized. The use of Tukey HSD is in alignment with extant brand extension and brand evaluation studies and was, thus, deemed appropriate for use in this study (Doraiswamy, 2011). The results of this post-hoc analysis are depicted in Table 15 below. Following the presentation of this table, the various results of hypotheses regarding gender identity group differences are forwarded. All hypothesised relationships were tested at a 5% significance level. As differences were only observed for *three* dimensions of evaluation, only these three evaluation elements are addressed below. To aid readability, significant differences are in bold.

Table 15: Gender Identity Group Differences in Brand Extension Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Group with Group		P-Value	Sig?	Mean difference
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)	Masculine	Feminine	0.81	x	-0.22
		Androgynous	0.59	x	-0.30
		Undifferentiated	0.69	x	0.27
	Feminine	Masculine	0.81	x	0.22
		Androgynous	0.98	x	-0.08
		Undifferentiated	0.15	x	0.50
	Androgynous	Masculine	0.59	x	0.30

		Feminine Undifferentiated	0.98 0.05	x ✓	0.08 0.58
	Undifferentiated	Masculine	0.69	x	-0.27
		Feminine Androgynous	0.15 0.05	x ✓	-0.50 -0.58
Attitude towards the extension	Masculine	Feminine	0.99	x	-0.03
		Androgynous	0.80	x	-0.26
		Undifferentiated	0.35	x	0.49
	Feminine	Masculine	0.99	x	0.03
		Androgynous	0.82	x	-0.23
		Undifferentiated	0.24	x	0.52
	Androgynous	Masculine	0.80	x	0.26
		Feminine	0.82	x	0.23
		Undifferentiated	0.02	✓	0.75
	Undifferentiated	Masculine	0.35	x	-0.49
		Feminine	0.24	x	-0.52
		Androgynous	0.02	✓	-0.75
Brand Preference	Masculine	Feminine	0.99	x	-0.09
		Androgynous	0.52	x	-0.35
		Undifferentiated	0.66	x	0.30
	Feminine	Masculine	0.99	x	0.09
		Androgynous	0.68	x	-0.26
		Undifferentiated	0.38	x	0.39
	Androgynous	Masculine	0.52	x	0.35
		Feminine	0.68	x	0.26
		Undifferentiated	0.03	✓	0.65
	Undifferentiated	Masculine	0.66	x	-0.30
		Feminine	0.38	x	-0.39
		Androgynous	0.03	✓	-0.65

As depicted above, significant differences were noted between *androgynous* and *undifferentiated* individuals for attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension and brand preference. The results of the hypotheses that tested for differences between groups are now set forth in more detail.

H_{1B} postulated that masculine individuals would exhibit less favourable evaluations (attitude towards the extension/ original brand/ brand preference) of the extension as compared to androgynous individuals. H_{1B} was not supported at the 5% significance level (p-value = 0.80; 0.59; 0.52). Thus, no significant difference was observed in the evaluation of the extension between masculine and androgynous individuals. H_{1C} anticipated that feminine individuals would also display less positive evaluations of the extension (attitude towards the extension/ original brand/ brand preference) as compared to androgynous individuals. H_{1C} was not upheld (p-value = 0.82; 0.98; 0.68). Consequently, feminine and androgynous individuals did not evaluate the AE differently in terms of attitudes or preference.

H_{1D} theorised that androgynous individuals would demonstrate more favourable evaluations of the extension (attitude towards the extension/ original brand/ brand

preference), as compared to masculine/ feminine/ undifferentiated individuals. H_{1D} was supported at a 5% significance level regarding undifferentiated individuals (p-value= 0.02; 0.05; 0.03) but was not supported regarding masculine (0.80; 0.59; 0.52) or feminine individuals (p-values=0.82; 0.98; 0.68). Thus, androgynous individuals evaluated the extension in a significantly dissimilar (and more favourable) manner than undifferentiated individuals (mean difference = 0.58, 0.75, 0.65) but not differently to masculine or feminine individuals. Lastly, H_{1E} proposed that undifferentiated individuals would exhibit less favourable evaluations of the extension (attitude towards the extension/ original brand/ brand preference) as compared to androgynous individuals. H_{1E} was supported (p-value =0.02; 0.05; 0.03). Undifferentiated individuals exhibited significantly different (lower) evaluations of the AE compared to androgynous individuals (M= -0.58, -0.75, -0.65).

Having addressed all hypotheses regarding gender identity, the inferential statistics concerning self-concept are now set forth.

5.7.2.2 SELF-CONCEPT AND BRAND EXTENSION EVALUATION

H_{2A} postulated that self-concept would influence brand extension evaluation (see section 3.5). Self-concept consists of actual and ideal self-concept and brand extension evaluation consists of 6 dimensions. Thus, H_{2A1} to H_{2A6} formally anticipated that *actual* self-concept would influence brand extension evaluation. Similarly, H_{2A7} to H_{2A12} proposed that *ideal* self-concept would influence brand extension evaluation. The results regarding actual self-concept are presented addressed first, followed by those concerning ideal self-concept.

- **Actual Self-Concept**

As stated above, H_{2A1} to H_{2A6} postulated that *actual* self-concept influenced brand extension evaluation. Given that brand extension evaluation consisted of six dimensions, H_{2A1}, H_{2A2}, H_{2A3}, H_{2A4}, H_{2A5} and H_{2A6} posited that *actual* self-concept would influence: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent respectively. Linear Regression was utilized to test each of these relationships. Results were interpreted at a 5% significance level. None of the assumptions of linear regression, namely homoscedasticity, normality, outliers, multicollinearity and linearity, were violated (Pallant, 2013). The results of H_{2A1} to H_{2A6} are first summarised in Table 16 in relation to the specific aspect of brand extension evaluation. The results regarding each hypothesis are presented in more detail, individually, thereafter.

Table 16: Actual Self-Concept and Brand Extension Evaluation Findings

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	T-value	P-value	Sig?	Model fit
Perception of overall fit	Linear Regression	5.09	0.00	✓	0.08
Perception of brand image fit		9.52	0.00	✓	0.24
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		6.53	0.00	✓	0.13
Attitude towards the extension		6.57	0.00	✓	0.13
Brand Preference		5.77	0.00	✓	0.10
Purchase Intent		6.21	0.00	✓	0.12
Overall Evaluation		7.77	0.00	✓	0.17

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

Actual self-concept influenced all aspects of brand extension evaluation, as well as brand extension evaluation overall (a composite of all evaluation dimensions). The results of each hypothesis are now set forth, in turn.

H_{2A1} was supported at the 5% significance level (F-test= 0.08, p-value =0.00). Thus, it is deduced that actual self-concept influences individuals' perceptions of overall fit amid the original brand and a brand extension. H_{2A2} was also upheld at the 5% significance level (F-test = 0.24, p-value = 0.00). As such, it is deduced that actual self-concept affects perceptions of brand image fit between the parent brand and an extension. H_{2A3} was supported at the 5% level of significance (F-test =0.13, p-value = 0.00). Consequently, it is inferred that actual self-concept impacts individuals' attitudes towards the original brand post extension. H_{2A4} was upheld at the 5% significance level (F-test =0.13, p-value = 0.00). Accordingly, actual self-concept is understood to influence individuals' attitudes towards the extension. H_{2A5} was upheld at the 5% significance level (F-test = 0.10, p-value = 0.00). It is, therefore, deduced that actual self-concept affects brand preference. Lastly, H_{2A6} was supported at the 5% significance level (F-test = 0.12, p-value = 0.00). Therefore, it is concluded that actual self-concept influenced purchase intent.

It can, therefore, be deduced that actual self-concept influences: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand post-extension, brand preference and purchase intent.

Examining the model fit statistics and taking into account that values exceeding $R^2=0.67$, $R^2=0.33$ and $R^2=0.19$ are indicative of possessing substantial, moderate and weak predictive ability respectively (Chin, Marcolin & Newsted, 2003), the following commentary regarding actual self-concept can be made. Given that the model fit values for the respective dimensions of brand extension evaluation were 0.08, 0.24, 0.13, 0.13, 0.10 and 0.12, it can be concluded that actual self-concept has a somewhat limited predictive ability with regards to brand extension evaluation. Sole reliance on actual self-concept would leave a noteworthy 83% of the variance in overall brand

extension evaluation unaccounted for. However, lower values in this regard were to be anticipated given the study took place within a consumer behaviour context and, thus, actual self-concept is deemed to possess moderate predictive power (Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2011). Furthermore, this rather low level of explained variance is in line with prior comparable works that also examined self-concept within a consumer behaviour context (Gountas & Mavondo, 2003).

Having addressed actual self-concept, the inferential statistics regarding *ideal* self-concept must now be offered.

- **Ideal Self-Concept**

H_{2A} postulated that self-concept would influence brand extension evaluation. Self-concept consisted of actual self-concept and ideal self-concept. Having already addressed actual self-concept, ideal self-concept is now attended to. Due to the fact that brand extension evaluation comprised of the aforementioned dimensions, H_{2A7}, H_{2A8}, H_{2A9}, H_{2A10}, H_{2A11} and H_{2A12} posited that *ideal* self-concept would influence: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand post-extension, brand preference and purchase intent respectively. Linear Regression was utilized to test each of these relationships. None of the assumptions of this statistical technique, namely homoscedasticity, normality, outliers, multicollinearity and linearity (Pallant, 2013), were violated. The results were interpreted at a 5% significance level. The results of H_{2A7} to H_{2A12} are first summarised in Table 17, in accordance with the dimension of brand extension evaluation they concern, and then presented individually thereafter.

Table 17: Ideal Self-Concept and Brand Extension Evaluation Findings

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	T-value	P-value	Sig?	Model Fit
Perception of overall fit	Linear Regression	5.40	0.00	✓	0.10
Perception of brand image fit		11.90	0.00	✓	0.33
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		7.39	0.00	✓	0.16
Attitude towards the extension		6.59	0.00	✓	0.13
Brand Preference		5.90	0.00	✓	0.11
Purchase Intent		6.37	0.00	✓	0.12
Overall Evaluation		8.37	0.00	✓	0.20

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

Ideal self-concept influenced all aspects of brand extension evaluation as well as overall brand extension evaluation. The results regarding each hypothesis are now presented in turn.

H_{2A7} was supported at the 5% significance level (F-test = 0.10, p-value = 0.00). Hence, it is deduced that ideal self-concept influences individuals' perceptions of overall fit amid the original brand and a brand extension. H_{2A8} was also upheld at the 5% significance level (F-test = 0.33, p-value = 0.00). Therefore, it is understood that ideal self-concept impacts perceptions of brand image fit. H_{2A9} was supported at the 5% level of significance (F-test = 0.16, p-value = 0.00). Accordingly, it is concluded that ideal self-concept influences individuals' attitudes towards the original brand, post extension. H_{2A10} was upheld at the 5% significance level (F-test = 0.13, p-value = 0.00). Thus, ideal self-concept influences individuals' attitudes towards the extension. H_{2A11} was upheld at the 5% significance level (F-test = 0.11, p-value = 0.00). It is, then, deduced that ideal self-concept influences brand preference. Lastly, H_{2A12} was supported at the 5% significance level (F-test = 0.12, p-value = 0.00). As such, ideal self-concept influences purchase intent.

Accordingly, it is concluded that *ideal* self influences all dimensions of extension evaluation of this work, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand post-extension, brand preference and purchase intent.

Again, considering the model fit statistics regarding this construct and brand extension evaluation were: 0.10, 0.33, 0.16, 0.13, 0.11 and 0.12 respectively, ideal self-concept's predictive power concerning brand extension evaluation is rather weak with the exception of perception of brand image fit where it is moderate (Chin *et al.*, 2003). Exclusive reliance on ideal self-concept would leave a substantial 80% of the variance in overall brand extension evaluation unaccounted for. However, these figures must be considered within the consumer behaviour context where they are considered to be moderate (Hair *et al.*, 2011) and in alignment with prior research conducted in this context (Gountas & Mavondo, 2003).

Given that both *actual* and *ideal* self-concept were found to influence all dimensions of brand extension evaluation, it can be concluded that self-concept was found to influence all aspects of brand extension evaluation. Having addressed the hypotheses concerning the theorised influence of these constructs on evaluation, it is necessary to ascertain which aspect of self-concept exerts a *stronger* influence on brand extension evaluation.

• Actual And Ideal Self-Concept: A Comparison

H_{2B} postulated that *ideal* self-concept would have a stronger influence on the evaluation of the AE, as compared to the affect *actual* self-concept would exert (see section 3.4). Again, given that brand extension evaluation comprised of 6 evaluation variables in this work, H_{2B1}, H_{2B2}, H_{2B3}, H_{2B4}, H_{2B5} and H_{2B6} posited that *ideal* self-concept would have a stronger affect on: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the

extension, brand preference and purchase intent respectively. Linear regression was employed to empirically assess these relationships, the results of which are first summarised in Table 18 and then addressed, in turn, thereafter. Particularly, Table 18 summarises the beta values for each dimension of self-concept individually before reporting which dimension exerted a stronger influence on extension evaluation.

Table 18: Actual and Ideal Self-Concept Comparison of Influence

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	Beta Value	Stronger Influence?
Perception of overall fit	Linear Regression	Actual = 0.17	Ideal Self-Concept
		Ideal = 0.21	
Perception of brand image fit		Actual = 0.24	Ideal Self-Concept
		Ideal = 0.44	
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		Actual = 0.20	Ideal Self-Concept
		Ideal = 0.29	
Attitude towards the extension		Actual = 0.23	Ideal Self-Concept
		Ideal = 0.23	
Brand Preference		Actual = 0.20	Ideal Self-Concept
		Ideal = 0.22	
Purchase Intent		Actual = 0.21	Ideal Self-Concept
		Ideal = 0.23	
Overall Evaluation		Actual = 0.42	Ideal Self-Concept
		Ideal = 0.44	

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

Firstly, it must be noted that all beta values depicted above are positive. Therefore, holding all else constant, the more congruent an individual perceives his self-image (whether this is actual or idealised) to be with the androgynous brand extension's image, the higher the brand extension evaluation score. When comparing which aspect of self-concept, namely actual or ideal self-concept, exerted a stronger influence on brand extension evaluation, *ideal* self-concept was found to exert a stronger influence on all aspects of brand extension evaluation, as well as overall brand extension evaluation. This is observed in Table 18 above. The results are now set forth in more detail.

H_{2B1} was supported, with ideal self-concept demonstrating a higher beta value (beta = 0.21) than actual self-concept (0.17). Thus, it is concluded that ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on individuals' perceptions of overall fit amid the parent brand and the extension than actual self-concept does. H_{2B2} was upheld, with ideal self-concept demonstrating a higher beta value (0.44) than actual self-concept (0.24). Consequently, it is resolved that ideal self-concept exerts a stronger influence on individuals' perceptions of brand image fit, as compared to actual self-concept. H_{2B3} was supported, with ideal self-concept demonstrating a higher beta value (0.29) than actual self-concept (0.20). Consequently, it is resolved that ideal self-concept wields a

greater impact on individuals' attitude towards the original brand post-extension, as compared to actual self-concept. H_{2B4} was supported, with ideal self-concept demonstrating a higher beta value (0.23) than actual self-concept (0.23). Thus, it is concluded that ideal self-concept exercises a greater influence on individuals' attitude towards extension, as compared to actual self-concept. H_{2B5} was supported, with ideal self-concept exhibiting a higher beta value (0.22) than actual self-concept (0.20). It is, therefore, deduced that ideal self-concept exerts a stronger affect on brand preference, as compared to actual self-concept. Lastly, H_{2B6} was supported, with ideal self-concept having a higher beta value (0.23) than actual self-concept (0.21). Accordingly, it is concluded that ideal self-concept exercises a greater influence on purchase intent, as compared to actual self-concept.

As such, *ideal* self-concept demonstrated a stronger influence on all aspects of extension evaluation, as compared to *actual* self-concept. That is, ideal self-concept exerted a greater affect: on perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand post-extension, brand preference and purchase intent.

Self-concept was also postulated to exert a moderating effect on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation (section 3.4). The results of this hypothesised influence are presented in the section that follows.

- **Self-Concept as a Moderator**

It was previously theorised that self-concept would moderate the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. The results of the hypotheses that tested this are now addressed. These results were tested for using the Interaction Effect method and Linear Regression. The results were interpreted at a 5% significance level. Thus, where the interaction term was found to be significant, it was concluded that moderation had been evidenced.

Gender identity, here, was operationalized as masculinity and femininity. Given that all four gender identity segments are interpretations of an individual's respective levels of masculinity and femininity (e.g. androgynous is a high co-presence of both; and undifferentiated is a low co-presence of both), it was deemed sufficient to ascertain an understanding of whether masculinity and femininity and their respective influence on extension evaluation was affected by self-concept. Further, this manner of operationalizing gender identity when assessing whether its relationship with behavioural outcomes is moderated by a certain other variable is in line with extant literature (e.g. Feiereisen *et al.*, 2009).

H_{2C} postulated that self-concept moderated the relationship between gender identity and extension evaluation. Self-concept comprised of actual and ideal self-concept. Gender identity was operationalized as masculinity and femininity. Brand extension

evaluation consisted of six dimensions: perceptions of overall and brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand and the extension, brand preference and purchase intent. H_{2C1} to H_{2C24} were tested for using the Interaction Effect method and linear regression. Given that gender identity consisted of masculinity and femininity; and that self-concept comprised of actual self-concept and ideal self-concept, interaction terms were created between *masculinity* and actual self-concept as well as masculinity and ideal self-concept. Likewise, interaction terms were created between *femininity* and actual self-concept, as well as femininity and ideal self-concept. Where the relationship between the Interaction Effect and the dimension of brand extension evaluation was found to be significant, it was concluded that a moderating effect was exerted.

Consequently, H_{2C1} to H_{2C6} concerned *actual* self-concept and its potential moderation of the relationship between *femininity* and each aspect of extension evaluation. H_{2C7} to H_{2C12} postulated that *ideal* self-concept would moderate the relationship between *femininity* and each dimension of evaluation.

Similarly, H_{2C13} to H_{2C18} anticipated that *actual* self-concept would moderate the relationship between *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation, for each aspect of evaluation. H_{2C19} to H_{2C24} postulated that *ideal* self-concept would moderate the relationship amid *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation for each evaluation dimension.

The results regarding the above hypotheses are first summarised in accordance with the dimension of brand extension evaluation that they relate to. They are presented in more detail thereafter. The results concerning *actual* self-concept are set forth prior to the results regarding ideal self-concept. Particularly, the results regarding *actual* self-concept's moderating influence of the relationship between *femininity* and brand extension evaluation is presented in Table 19. Table 20 then presents the results concerning *actual* self-concept's moderating effect of the relationship between *masculinity* and the brand extension evaluation. The same approach is assumed for the presentation of results regarding *ideal* self-concept, which are summarised in Table 21 and 22 respectively.

Thus, the results regarding *actual* self-concept exerting a moderating effect on the relationship between *femininity* and brand extension evaluation are summarised in Table 19 that follows.

Table 19: Actual Self-Concept as a Moderator of Femininity and Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	T-value	P-value	Significant?	F
Perception of overall fit	MMR	5.30	0.00	✓	28.06
Perception of brand image fit		9.17	0.00	✓	84.06
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		7.09	0.00	✓	50.27
Attitude towards the extension		6.89	0.00	✓	47.53
Brand Preference		6.45	0.00	✓	39.81
Purchase Intent		5.98	0.00	✓	35.76
Overall Evaluation		8.06	0.00	✓	64.27

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

As observed above, *actual* self-concept moderates the relationship between *femininity* and brand extension evaluation. This holds for all dimensions of brand extension evaluation as well as for overall evaluation of the extension.

H_{2C1} to H_{2C6} postulated that *actual* self-concept moderated the relationship between *femininity* and brand extension evaluation for each aspect of evaluation. The results concerning each hypothesis, in this regard, are now addressed.

H_{2C1} postulated that actual self-concept moderated the relationship amid femininity and perception of overall fit. H_{2C1} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). Thus, the interaction effect between femininity and actual self-concept had a significant influence on the dependent variable of perception of overall fit. H_{2C2} theorised that actual self-concept would moderate the relationship between femininity and perception of brand image fit. H_{2C2} was upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). H_{2C3} anticipated that actual self-concept moderates the relationship between femininity and attitude towards the original brand (post-extension). H_{2C3} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). H_{2C4} postulated that actual self-concept would moderate the relationship amid femininity and attitude towards the extension. H_{2C4} was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). H_{2C5} anticipated that actual self-concept would moderate the relationship amid femininity and brand preference. H_{2C5} was upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). Lastly, H_{2C6} anticipated that the relationship between femininity and brand extension evaluation was moderated by actual self-concept, was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value =0.00).

Therefore, *actual* self-concept moderates the relationship between femininity and each aspect of extension evaluation: perceptions of overall and brand image fit, attitude towards the extension and the original brand (post-extension), brand

preference and purchase intent. The inclusion of actual self-concept as a moderator of the relationship amid femininity and brand extension evaluation lowered the coefficient beta regarding the central relationship ($\beta=0.18$ to $\beta=0.12$). Therefore, *following* the inclusion of this moderator, an individual's level of femininity still affected the brand extension evaluation, however the effect evoked by femininity was slightly reduced, as compared to the influence exerted on extension evaluation *prior* to its inclusion.

The findings pertaining to actual self-concept as a potential moderator of *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation are now summarised in Table 20 and presented more comprehensively thereafter.

Table 20: Actual Self-Concept as a Moderator of Masculinity and Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	T-value	P-value	Significant?	F
Perception of overall fit	MMR	4.70	0.00	✓	22.08
Perception of brand image fit		9.23	0.00	✓	85.21
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		6.52	0.00	✓	42.55
Attitude towards the extension		6.93	0.00	✓	48.06
Brand Preference		6.55	0.00	✓	40.11
Purchase Intent		6.04	0.00	✓	36.45
Overall Evaluation		7.87	0.00	✓	61.45

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

As depicted in Table 20 above, *actual* self-concept moderated the relationship between *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation. This was evidenced for each dimension of brand extension evaluation, as well as for overall evaluation.

H_{2C7} to H_{2C12} postulated that *actual* self-concept moderated the relationship between *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation, for each aspect of evaluation. The results regarding each hypothesis, in this regard, are now set forth.

H_{2C7} postulated that actual self-concept moderated the relationship amid *masculinity* and perception of overall fit. H_{2C7} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). H_{2C8} theorised that actual self-concept would moderate the relationship between *masculinity* and perception of brand image fit. H_{2C8} was upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). H_{2C9} anticipated that actual self-concept moderates the relationship between *masculinity* and attitude towards the original brand (post-extension). H_{2C9} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). H_{2C10} postulated that actual self-concept would moderate the relationship amid

masculinity and attitude towards the extension. H_{2C10} was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). H_{2C11} anticipated that actual self-concept would moderate the relationship amid *masculinity* and brand preference. H_{2C11} was upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). Lastly, H_{2C12} anticipated that the relationship between *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation was moderated by actual self-concept. H_{2C12} supported at a 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00).

Thus, *actual* self-concept moderated the relationship between *masculinity* and all dimensions of brand extension evaluation, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent. The inclusion of the moderator (actual self-concept) of the relationship between masculinity and brand extension evaluation changed the sign of the coefficient beta ($\beta=0.06$ to $\beta=-0.27$). Therefore, where prior to its inclusion higher levels of masculinity resulted in higher extension evaluation scores, now higher levels of masculinity resulted in lower evaluation scores.

Having addressed actual self-concept as a moderator, it is now necessary to forward the findings regarding *ideal* self-concept as a potential moderator. Table 21 summarised the results regarding *ideal* self-concept exerting a moderating influence on the relationship between *femininity* and brand extension evaluation. Table 22 summarises the results regarding *ideal* self-concept's moderation of the relationship amid *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation. Following the presentation of each of these tables, the results regarding each hypothesis are forwarded, in turn.

Table 21 depicts the results that exhibit that *ideal* self-concept moderates the relationship between *femininity* and brand extension evaluation for all aspects of evaluation.

Table 21: Ideal Self-Concept as a Moderator of Femininity and Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	T-value	P-value	Significant?	F
Perception of overall fit	MMR	5.45	0.00	✓	29.66
Perception of brand image fit		11.31	0.00	✓	127.96
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		7.48	0.00	✓	44.51
Attitude towards the extension		6.67	0.00	✓	55.96
Brand Preference		6.16	0.00	✓	39.20
Purchase Intent		6.26	0.00	✓	38.46
Overall Evaluation		8.41	0.00	✓	70.03

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

As observed above, *ideal* self-concept moderates the relationship between *femininity* and each aspect of brand extension evaluation, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent.

H_{2C13} to H_{2C18} postulated that *actual* self-concept moderated the relationship between *femininity* and brand extension evaluation for each aspect of evaluation. The results regarding each hypothesis, in this regard, are now presented.

H_{2C13} postulated that ideal self-concept moderated the relationship amid femininity and perception of overall fit. H_{2C13} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). H_{2C14} theorised that ideal self-concept would moderate the relationship between femininity and perception of brand image fit. H_{2C14} was upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). H_{2C15} anticipated that ideal self-concept moderates the relationship between femininity and attitude towards the original brand (post-extension). H_{2C15} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). H_{2C16} postulated that ideal self-concept would moderate the relationship amid femininity and attitude towards the extension. H_{2C16} was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). H_{2C17} anticipated that ideal self-concept would moderate the relationship amid femininity and brand preference. H_{2C17} was upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00). Lastly, H_{2C18}, which anticipated that the relationship between femininity and extension evaluation was moderated by ideal self-concept, was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value = 0.00).

Thus, the results demonstrated that *ideal* self-concept moderated the relationship between *femininity* and brand extension evaluation. This was the case for all dimensions of brand extension evaluation, including overall brand extension evaluation.

The inclusion of the ideal self-concept as a moderator of the relationship between femininity and brand extension evaluation lowered the coefficient beta ($\beta=0.18$ to $\beta=0.17$) regarding the relationship amid femininity and brand extension evaluation. Thus, following its inclusion as a moderator, femininity still influenced brand extension evaluation, but this affect was slightly weaker than prior to the inclusion of the moderator.

Having addressed ideal self-concept and *femininity*, *masculinity* must now be addressed. Table 22 summarises the results regarding ideal self-concept moderating the relationship between masculinity and brand extension evaluation.

Table 22: Ideal Self-Concept as a Moderator of Masculinity and Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	T-value	P-value	Significant?	F
Perception of overall fit	MMR	4.95	0.00	✓	24.48
Perception of brand image fit		11.22	0.00	✓	125.95
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		7.21	0.00	✓	52.09
Attitude towards the extension		6.71	0.00	✓	45.07
Brand Preference		6.15	0.00	✓	37.57
Purchase Intent		6.13	0.00	✓	37.58
Overall Evaluation		8.22	0.00	✓	66.90

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

As observed in Table 22, ideal self-concept moderated the relationship between masculinity and brand extension evaluation for all aspects of brand extension evaluation, as well as for overall brand extension evaluation.

H_{2C19} to H_{2C24} postulated that *ideal* self-concept moderated the relationship between *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation, for each aspect of evaluation. The results of hypotheses that investigated ideal self-concept's potential moderation of the relationship amid masculinity and brand extension evaluation are now forwarded, in turn.

H_{2C19} postulated that ideal self-concept moderated the relationship amid *masculinity* and perception of overall fit. H_{2C19} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). H_{2C20} theorised that ideal self-concept would moderate the relationship between *masculinity* and perception of brand image fit. H_{2C20} was upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). H_{2C21} anticipated that ideal self-concept moderates the relationship between *masculinity* and attitude towards the original brand (post-extension). H_{2C21} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). H_{2C22} postulated that ideal self-concept would moderate the relationship amid *masculinity* and attitude towards the extension. H_{2C22} was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). H_{2C23} anticipated that ideal self-concept would moderate the relationship amid *masculinity* and brand preference. H_{2C23} was upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value =0.00). Lastly, H_{2C24}, which anticipated that the relationship between *masculinity* and extension evaluation was moderated by ideal self-concept, was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value =0.00).

Thus, *ideal* self-concept also moderated the relationship between *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation. This was evidenced for all aspects of brand extension evaluation, namely: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude

towards the original brand (post-extension), attitude towards the extension, brand preference and purchase intent.

The inclusion of the ideal self-concept as a moderator of the relationship between masculinity and brand extension evaluation changed the sign of the coefficient beta ($\beta=0.06$ to $\beta = -0.80$) of the relationship between masculinity and brand extension evaluation. Thus, where before the inclusion of the moderator (ideal self-concept) higher levels of masculinity resulted in higher brand extension evaluation scores, now higher levels of masculinity resulted in lower evaluation scores.

Therefore, results demonstrated that self-concept moderated the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. All hypotheses regarding the self-concept construct have been addressed. The results of all hypotheses regarding product category follow.

5.7.2.3 PRODUCT CATEGORY TYPE AND BRAND EXTENSION EVALUATION

H_{3A} posited that the AE implemented in the *symbolic* product category would receive *more favourable* evaluations than the one implemented in the *functional* category. Thus, as evaluation was operationalized via the previously presented dimensions, H_{3A1}, H_{3A2}, H_{3A3}, H_{3A4}, H_{3A5} and H_{3A6} posited that the AE introduced in the symbolic category would witness more positive evaluations than the AE extended in the functional category. Thus, the AE in the symbolic category would witness more positive: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand post-extension, brand preference and purchase intent scores respectively.

Table 23 summarises the findings regarding a comparison between the symbolic (S) and functional (F) product type regarding each dimension of evaluation. The respective means for each product category have been presented to provide a more comprehensive depiction of the differences observed. Each of the hypotheses was tested for using independent-samples T-test. The results concerning each hypothesis are presented after this summary.

Table 23: Product Category Types and Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	T-value	P-value	Sig?	Means	Mean diff.
Perception of overall fit	Independent Samples T-test	1.45	0.15	X	(S) 3.34	0.16
					(F) 3.18	
Perception of brand image fit		3.29	0.00	✓	3.03	0.36
					2.66	
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		2.23	0.03	✓	5.13	0.37
					4.76	

Attitude towards the extension		3.56	0.00	✓	5.07	0.69
					4.38	
Brand Preference		3.38	0.00	✓	5.11	0.58
					4.54	
Purchase Intent		3.82	0.00	✓	5.03	0.77
					4.26	

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

As exhibited above, significant differences were observed between the two product categories for all dimensions of brand extension evaluation except perception of overall fit.

H_{3A1} postulated that higher perception of overall fit scores would be demonstrated for the brand that was in the symbolic category, as compared to the functional category. H_{3A1} was not supported at a 5% significance level, with individuals not displaying significantly different perception of fit evaluations in accordance with the product category that the AE was implemented in (p-value = 0.149)($t = 1.45$). H_{3A2} posited that higher perception of brand image fit scores would be demonstrated for the brand that was in the symbolic category, as compared to the functional category. This hypothesis was supported at the 5% significance level (3.03 vs. 2.66; p-value = 0.00) ($t = 3.29$). Accordingly, it is concluded that respondents displayed higher perceptions of brand image fit depending towards the AE introduced in the symbolic product category than the functional one. H_{3A3} theorized that the extension introduced in the symbolic category would witness higher attitudes towards the original brand post-extension, than the one introduced in the functional product category. H_{3A3} was supported at the 5% significance level (5.13 vs. 4.76; p-value = 0.03)($t = 2.23$). Thus, it is deduced that respondents exhibited more favourable attitudes towards the original brand (post-extension) in the symbolic category. H_{3A4} posited that the AE implemented in the symbolic category would receive more favourable attitude towards the extension scores, as compared to the one introduced in the functional category. H_{3A4} was supported at the 5% significance level (5.07 vs. 4.38; p-value = 0.00)($t = 3.563$). Thus, more positive attitudes towards the extension were reported for the AE in the symbolic category than the functional one. H_{3A5} postulated that the AE in the symbolic category would receive higher brand preference scores than the AE introduced in the functional product category. H_{3A5} was upheld at the 5% level of significance (5.11 vs. 4.54; p-value = 0.00)($t = 3.24$). Respondents displayed higher preference scores for the AE depending in the symbolic than the AE in the functional category. Lastly, H_{3A6} postulated that the AE in the symbolic category would receive stronger purchase intent scores than the one in the functional category. H_{3A6} was supported at the 5% significance level (5.03 vs. 4.26; p-value = 0.00)($t = 3.815$).

Respondents thus exhibited statistically dissimilar purchase intentions in accordance with product category type. Particularly, individuals evaluated the AE that was

introduced in the symbolic category more favourably than the AE in the functional category. This occurred for all dimensions of extension evaluation, with the exception of perception of overall fit which respondents evaluated similarly.

Having presented the results of all hypothesized relationships regarding product category type, it is necessary to address the final key construct of this work, namely gender of parent brand.

5.7.2.4 GENDER OF PARENT BRAND AND BRAND EXTENSION EVALUATION

H_{4A} posited that the AE introduced from a masculine parent brand would receive *more favourable* evaluations than the one implemented from an originally feminine parent brand. Thus, as evaluation was operationalized via the previously presented dimensions, H_{4A1}, H_{4A2}, H_{4A3}, H_{4A4}, H_{4A5} and H_{4A6} speculated that the AE introduced from a masculine parent brand would witness more positive: perception of overall fit, perception of brand image fit, attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand post-extension, brand preference and purchase intent scores, as compared to the AE introduced from an originally feminine parent brand. H_{4A1} to H_{4A6} were empirically tested for using independent samples t-tests. The results for these hypotheses are summarised in Table 24. Each hypothesis is addressed in turn, thereafter.

Table 24: Gender of Parent Brand and Extension Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	T-value	P-value	Significant?
Perception of overall fit	Independent Samples T-test	-0.25	0.80	x
Perception of brand image fit		0.30	0.76	x
Attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)		0.004	0.99	x
Attitude towards the extension		0.81	0.42	x
Brand Preference		-0.07	0.94	x
Purchase Intent		0.23	0.82	x

Dependent variable = Brand Extension Evaluation

As observed above in Table 24, no significant differences were detected in accordance with the gender of the parent brand. The results for each hypothesis regarding potential differences between the two parent brand genders are now set forth.

H_{4A1} posited that the AE that extended from a masculine parent brand would witness more positive perceptions of overall fit, as compared to the one introduced from a feminine parent brand. H_{4A1} was not supported at the 5% significance level (p-value = 0.80)($t = -0.25$). Thus, the means cannot be considered significantly different. H_{4A2} anticipated that the extension introduced from a masculine parent brand would receive

more positive perception of brand image scores compared to the extension introduced from a feminine one. H_{4A2} was not upheld at a 5% significance level ($p\text{-value}=0.76$)($t=0.30$). H_{4A3} theorised that the AE that extended from a masculine parent brand would witness more positive attitude towards the extension scores, as compared to the one introduced from a feminine parent brand. H_{4A3} was not supported at a 5% significance level ($p\text{-value}=0.82$)($t=0.23$). H_{4A4} postulated that the AE extended from a masculine original brand would observe higher attitude toward the original brand scores compared to one from a feminine brand. H_{4A4} was not upheld at the 5% significance level ($p\text{-value}=0.99$)($t=0.00$). H_{4A5} anticipated that the extension from the masculine brand would witness higher levels of brand preference than the one from the feminine original brand. H_{4A5} was not upheld at a 5% level of significance ($p\text{-value}=0.96$) ($t=0.05$). Lastly, H_{4A6} predicted that the AE from the masculine original brand would receive higher levels of purchase intent than one extended from a feminine parent brand. H_{4A6} was also not upheld at a 5% level of significance ($p\text{-value}=0.82$)($t=0.23$).

Thus, it can be deduced that gender of parent brand did not influence extension evaluation for any dimensions of brand extension evaluation. No difference was found between the two parent brand genders and their respective androgynous extension evaluation scores. Thus, individuals do not display significantly different evaluations of an androgynous brand extension depending on whether the original brand was masculine or feminine.

All results regarding the gender of parent brand construct have been presented. It is now necessary to address the final set of hypotheses of this dissertation, namely those that assess potential differences in the evaluation of the masculine/ feminine parent brand and the androgynous brand extension.

5.7.2.5 THE EVALUATION OF A PARENT BRAND AND A BRAND EXTENSION: A COMPARISON

H_{5A} postulated that there was a difference in evaluation scores between the masculine or feminine gendered parent brand and the androgynous brand extension. Given that 3 of the brand extension evaluation dimensions are extension-specific, a comparison between the evaluation of the original brand and the brand extension was operationalized through the three common evaluations items between the two (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Therefore, attitude towards the brand, brand preference and purchase intent were investigated. Thus, H_{5A1} , H_{4A2} and H_{4A3} each hypothesised that there was a difference amid the original brand and extension in terms of: attitude towards the brand, brand preference and purchase intent respectively. Additionally, H_{4A4} predicted there would be a difference in overall evaluation scores between the two. Each of these is now addressed in turn, followed by a presentation of these findings in Table 25. A pairwise comparison was conducted to assess these potential differences in evaluation scores. The results are first summarised in Table 25,

alongside information regarding an increase or decrease in the mean. The results for each hypothesis regarding these differences are presented thereafter.

Table 25: Differences in Evaluation between Parent Brand and Extension

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	P-value	Sig?	Increase/decrease in mean?	T-value
Attitude towards the Brand	Paired Samples T-test	0.00	✓	↑	3.21
Brand Preference		0.00	✓	↑	6.12
Purchase Intent		0.11	x	N/A	-1.59
Overall Evaluation		0.01	✓	↑	2.54

Table 25 depicted the results regarding a difference in the evaluation of a gendered parent brand and an androgynous brand extension. Differences were evidenced for attitude towards the brand, brand preference and for overall evaluation. However, a significant difference was not observed for purchase intent scores. The results are now presented more comprehensively.

H_{5A1} anticipated that there would be a difference in attitude towards the brand scores between the original brand and the extension. H_{5A1} was supported at a 5% level of significance (p-value=0.00; t-value=3.21). H_{4A2} predicted that there would be a difference amid the two in terms of brand preference scores. H_{4A2} was also upheld at a 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value=6.12). Lastly, H_{4A3} anticipated that a difference would be observed between purchase intent scores for the extension and the original brand. H_{4A3} was not supported at a 5% significance level (p-value= 0.11; t-value=-1.59). H_{4A4} postulated that there would be a difference in the overall evaluation scores between the original brand and the extension. H_{4A4} was supported at a 5% level of significance (p-value= 0.01; t-value= 2.54).

Thus, it can be deduced that individuals evaluate a gendered (masculine/ feminine) parent brand differently to an androgynous brand extension for all aspects of evaluation (attitude towards the brand and brand preference), except for purchase intent. A difference was also observed between the overall evaluation scores for the brand extension and the parent brand too.

It was necessary to assess if such differences between the masculine or feminine gendered parent brand and the androgynous brand extension would still be discernable if product category type and gender of parent brand were controlled for. The results regarding product category type, in this regard, are now addressed.

- **Differences between the Parent Brand and Extension: Controlling for Product Category**

It was crucial to assess potential differences between the parent brand and the brand extension when controlling for the product category type. Accordingly, these differences were investigated within each product category to discern if the differences were still evidenced. The results of this investigation are summarised in Table 26.

Table 26: Differences in Evaluation for each Product Category

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	P-value	Sig?	Increase/decrease in mean?	T-value
SYMBOLIC PRODUCT CATEGORY					
Attitude towards the Brand	Paired Samples T-test	0.24	x	N/A	-1.17
Brand Preference		0.07	x	N/A	1.83
Purchase Intent		0.01	✓	↑	-2.68
Overall Evaluation		0.35	x	N/A	-0.93
FUNCTIONAL PRODUCT CATEGORY					
Attitude towards the Brand	Paired Samples T-test	0.00	✓	↑	5.63
Brand Preference		0.00	✓	↑	7.00
Purchase Intent		0.94	x	N/A	0.08
Overall Evaluation		0.00	✓	↑	4.32

As observed in Table 26, regarding the *symbolic* product category type, differences were only observed in purchase intent scores and not for attitude towards the brand, brand preference or overall evaluation. With respect to the *functional* category, differences were observed for all dimensions of brand evaluation (including attitude towards the brand, brand preference and overall evaluation), except for purchase intent. These results are now presented in accordance with the hypothesis that concerned them.

H_{5E1} postulated that there would be a difference in attitude towards the brand evaluation scores between the original brand and the brand extension for the *symbolic* product category. H_{5E1} was not supported at 5% significance level (p-value=0.24; t-value= -1.17). H_{5E2} predicted there was a difference in attitude towards the brand between the parent brand and the extension for the *functional* category. H_{5E2} was supported 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value= 5.63). H_{5F1} postulated that there would be a difference in brand preference between the original brand and the extension for the *symbolic* product category. H_{5F1} was not supported at 5% significance level (p-value=0.07; t-value= 1.83). H_{5F2} predicted there was a difference in brand preference between the parent brand and the extension for the *functional* category. H_{5F2} was supported 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value= 7.00). H_{5G1} postulated that there would be a difference in purchase intent amid the original

brand and the extension for the *symbolic* product category. H_{5G1} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value=0.01; t-value= -2.68). H_{5G2} anticipated a difference in purchase intent between the parent brand and the extension for the *functional category*. H_{5G2} was not supported 5% significance level (p-value=0.94; t-value=0.08). H_{5H1} postulated a difference in overall evaluation scores amid the parent brand and the extension for the *symbolic* product category. H_{5H1} was not supported at the 5% significance level (p-value=0.35; t-value= -0.93). Lastly, H_{5H2} anticipated a difference in overall evaluation scores between the parent brand and the extension for the *functional category*. H_{5H2} was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value= 4.32).

Thus, when controlling for product category type, dissimilarities in evaluation only hold for purchase intent regarding the symbolic category; and for attitude towards the brand, brand preference and overall evaluation for the functional category.

Having assessed potential differences in evaluation between the masculine and feminine gendered parent brand and the androgynous brand extension while controlling for *product category*, it is now necessary to assess this difference while controlling *gender of parent brand*.

- **Differences between the Parent Brand and Brand Extension: Controlling for the Gender of the Brand**

It was necessary to assess if differences in evaluation scores between the parent brand and the androgynous brand extension still occurred if gender of parent brand is controlled for. Thus, potential differences between the parent brand and the extension were assessed for each gender of brand. The results of this investigation are summarised in Table 27, in accordance with each gender of the parent brand, namely masculine and feminine. The results for each hypothesis are forwarded thereafter.

Table 27: Differences in Evaluation in Accordance with the Gender of the Brand

Aspect of Evaluation	Test employed	P-value	Sig?	Increase/decrease in mean?	T-value
MASCULINE PARENT BRAND					
Attitude towards the Brand	Paired Samples T-test	0.12	x	↑	1.57
Brand Preference		0.00	✓	↑	2.79
Purchase Intent		0.00	✓	↑	-3.18
Overall Evaluation		0.87	x	↑	0.16
FEMININE PARENT BRAND					
Attitude towards the Brand	Paired Samples T-test	0.00	✓	↑	2.88
Brand Preference		0.00	✓	↑	5.81
Purchase Intent		0.53	x	N/A	0.62
Overall Evaluation		0.00	✓	↑	3.13

As Table 27 depicts, regarding the *masculine* brand, differences in evaluation between the original brand and brand extension were observed only with brand preference and purchase intent. No significant differences were observed with respect to attitude towards the original brand and overall evaluation. With regards to the *feminine* brand, differences were observed for attitude towards the original brand, brand preference and overall evaluation. Differences were not observed for purchase intent. The results for each of the hypotheses regarding these are now forwarded.

H_{5I1} postulated that there would be a difference in attitude towards the brand evaluation scores between the original brand and the brand extension for the *masculine* parent brand. H_{5I1} was not supported at 5% significance level (p-value=0.12; t-value= 1.57). H_{5I2} predicted there was a difference in attitude towards the brand between the parent brand and the extension for the *feminine* original brand. H_{5I2} was supported 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value=2.88). H_{5J1} postulated that there would be a difference in brand preference between the original brand and the extension for the *masculine* parent brand. H_{5J1} was supported at 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value=2.79). H_{5J2} predicted there was a difference in brand preference between the parent brand and the extension for the *feminine* parent brand. H_{5J2} was supported 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value=5.81). H_{5K1} postulated that there would be a difference in purchase intent amid the original brand and the extension for the *masculine* original brand. H_{5K1} was supported at the 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value= -3.18). H_{5K2} anticipated a difference in purchase intent between the parent brand and the extension for the *feminine brand*. H_{5K2} was not supported 5% significance level (p-value=0.53; t-value= 0.62). H_{5L1} postulated a difference in overall evaluation scores amid the parent brand and the extension for the *masculine* parent brand. H_{5L1} was not supported at the 5% significance level (p-value=0.87; t-value=0.16). Lastly, H_{5L2} anticipated a difference in overall evaluation scores between the parent brand and the extension for the *feminine* original brand. H_{5L2} was supported at a 5% significance level (p-value=0.00; t-value= 3.13).

Therefore, differences in evaluation between the parent brand and the brand extension only hold for certain aspects of evaluation when controlling for the gender of the brand. Specifically, regarding a masculine original brand, differences in brand preference and purchase intent were observed. Regarding a feminine parent brand, differences in evaluation scores were witnessed for attitude towards the brand, brand preference and overall evaluation.

All of this study's hypothesised relationships and the results thereof have been addressed. The above relationships, with the exception of those addressing a comparison between the parent brand and brand extension (section 5.7.2.5), were also assessed for the control scenario. The control scenario referred to the original parent brand that respondents evaluated prior to being introduced to the androgynous brand

extension. While a thorough interpretation of these results is somewhat beyond the scope of this work (which focused on an androgynous brand extension specifically), a summary of these findings is presented in Appendix C for reference.

Elucidation and recommendations that arise from the results presented in this chapter are forwarded in the ensuing conclusions and recommendations chapter. Prior to this, a brief summary of the contents of this chapter is forwarded.

5.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter reported the results of the statistical analyses directed to reject or support the relationships hypothesised in earlier chapters. Prior to this, general descriptive statistics describing the final realised sample were reviewed in order to evaluate its appropriateness relative to the targets demarcated in the foregoing methodology chapter. Ensuing this, descriptive statistics of the central constructs were forwarded alongside indications of the reliability of summated scales. All summated scales exhibited satisfactory reliability.

Subsequently, the results of the statistical analyses were offered where hypotheses were either supported or rejected. Summaries of the results pertaining to each key construct's formally anticipated relationships were presented via Table 14 to Table 27. Of the two hypothesised direct relationships, self-concept's anticipated influence on extension evaluation was supported at the 5% significance level. Particularly, ideal self-concept exerted a stronger influence on evaluation than actual self-concept. Gender identity's influence on extension evaluation was also supported at the 5% significance level, but only for three dimensions of evaluation, namely: attitude towards the extension, attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) and brand preference. Self-concept was found to moderate the relationship between gender identity and extension evaluation at the 5% significance level. Regarding the hypothesized differences, key dissimilarities were observed between the two product categories, with the symbolic category reporting more favourable evaluation scores. Differences were also observed between evaluation scores of the extension and the parent brand. These occurred for the dimensions of attitude towards the brand and brand preference but not for purchase intent. Lastly, no differences in brand extension evaluation were evidenced in accordance with gender of parent brand.

Of greatest consideration, partial support was found for the primary objective of this study. The hypothesized direct influence of gender identity on brand extension evaluation was supported at the 5% level for the aforementioned three dimensions of brand extension evaluation. Thus, an individual's gender identity affects the manner in which they assess an androgynous brand extension in terms of their attitude towards both the extension itself, and the parent brand following the introduction of the extension; as well as in terms of their brand preference. The concluding chapter of

this study now cogitates and discusses these findings more thoroughly and forwards several recommendations that arise from them.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study set out to explore and provide insight regarding a potentially lucrative strategy for marketers: the introduction of an androgynous brand extension. It examined the potential influence of gender identity on individual's evaluation of such a brand extension. Additionally, it assessed three key potential influencers of this central relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation: self-concept, product category type and the gender of the parent brand.

This final chapter now provides a thorough interpretation of the results presented in the previous chapter. Each of the research objectives is first interpreted independently. Thereafter, this chapter reviews the results in a more holistic perspective in response to the research questions. Following this, the chapter then delineates various academic and managerial inferences that ensue from these conclusions. The penultimate section considers the methodological limitations that potentially diminish the value of this research. This chapter then concludes by suggesting potential future research opportunities that ensue from this study. Before this, however, a concise outline of the study is first forwarded to support the discussions and conclusions that follow.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Theoretical foundations for this study were provided via the two theory chapters of this dissertation. Firstly, Chapter 2 put forward evidence that postmodern consumers are identity constructors and that these individuals use brands to both create and communicate their identities (Baumgartner, 2002; Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998; Hamouda & Gharbi, 2013; Zinkham & Hong, 1991). Upon this backdrop, the chapter introduced the construct of gender identity, setting forth evidence of it possessing superior predictive power regarding behavioural outcomes, as compared to biological sex, especially within a postmodern environment (Costa *et al.*, 2001; Jaffe, 1994; Robbie & Neale 2012). Moreover, substantiation of the influence gender identity exerts on a plethora of consumer behaviour outcomes was provided (Fischer & Arnold, 1994; Martin & Gnoth, 2009; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012). The chapter presented evidence of the relationship between self-concept and behavioural outcomes (Parker, 2009; Quester *et al.*, 2000), whereafter the concept of a gendered brand image was introduced. The concept of androgynous brand extensions was then introduced. Chapter 3 further elaborated on brand extensions, delineating them as an attractive strategy that enables companies to introduce new brands in a less costly and less risky manner than introducing a stand-alone new brand

(Batra *et al.*, 2010; Doust & Esfahlan, 2012; Martinez & Pina, 2003; Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). Its appeal was shown to lie, chiefly, in the fact that it allows companies to leverage existing brand equity of the parent brand (Aaker, 1991; d'Astous *et al.*, 2007; Viot, 2011).

Hereafter, Chapter 3 introduced the concept of brand evaluation broadly and then narrowed this discussion to address brand *extension* evaluation. The six dimensions that comprise brand extension evaluation in this study were forwarded. The chapter also introduced the three factors that might influence the relationship between gender identity and brand evaluation namely self-concept, product category and gender of parent brand. Further evidence of their influence on consumer behaviour was forwarded (Bhat & Reddy, 1998; Jung & Lee, 2006). This chapter served to formally introduce the various postulated relationships that guided this research effort. Firstly, it introduced the posited main effect gender identity would exert on brand extension evaluation (H_{1A} , section 3.4). Thereafter, it theorised both the main effect self-concept would wield on brand extension evaluation (H_{2A} , section 3.5); as well as the potential moderating influence it would exert on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation (H_{2C} , section 3.5). Next, it presented the posited potential differences in brand extension evaluation scores between the two product categories (H_{3A} , section 3.6), and between the two parent brand genders (H_{4A} , section 3.7). Lastly, it forwarded the postulated differences in brand evaluation between the androgynous brand extension and the masculine or feminine parent brand (H_{5A} , section 3.8).

Chapter 4 then outlined the methodology employed to empirically assess the theorised relationships. It discussed salient concerns such as sampling, measurement and statistical analysis. Firstly, the research design and method were set forth, noting that the study employed a conclusive, 2 x 2 factorial design. Second, the chapter identified the target population as being Generation Y university students. Convenience sampling with quota controls of age and gender was employed. A final realised minimum sample size of $n=240$ was pursued as it was considered appropriate given sample sizes in extant literature as well as the statistical analysis techniques being utilized (Azar, 2013; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Hereafter, measurement of the study's chief constructs was delineated. The chapter closed by providing a detailed discussion of the key statistical analysis techniques employed in this research. These included: ANOVA, linear regression, t-tests and MMR, which were deemed appropriate given the techniques utilized in prior works (Frieden, 2013; Jung & Lee, 2006; Rhee & Johnson, 2012; Ulrich, 2013).

Chapter 5 then provided the results of the descriptive and inferential statistical analyses conducted. Firstly, the final realised sample of $n=288$ was considered appropriate (section 5.4). Descriptive analysis of the final sample also exposed it as being aligned with the outlined target population (section 5.5.1). Hereafter, descriptive statistics for the key constructs was assessed (see Table 11). Reliability of

the scales was all shown to be well above the prescribed minimums (see Table 13). Focus then shifted towards the testing of the postulated relationships. Hypotheses were considered at the 5% significance level.

The majority of posited relationships were supported, with the exception of a few. Most saliently, a direct main effect of gender identity on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension was supported (H_{1A}). This was the case for certain evaluation dimensions but not for all of them. Particularly, gender identity influenced attitude towards the brand extension (H_{1A3}), attitude towards the original brand (post-extension) (H_{1A4}) and brand preference (H_{1A5}). However, it did not affect: perception of overall fit (H_{1A1}), perception of brand image fit (H_{1A2}), as well as purchase intent (H_{1A6}).

Support was evidenced for the direct main effect of self-concept on all aspects of brand extension evaluation (H_{2A}). Moreover, *ideal* self-concept exerted a stronger influence than *actual* self-concept on all aspects of brand extension evaluation (H_{2B}). Additionally, support was demonstrated for the moderating effect exerted by self-concept on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation (H_{2C}). Differences were observed in brand extension evaluation scores in accordance with product category type (H_{3A}). Specifically, more favourable evaluations of the androgynous brand extension were witnessed for the brand extension in the *symbolic* product category, as compared to the *functional* category. Support was not observed regarding differences in evaluation scores in accordance with the gender of the parent brand (H_{4A}). That is, individuals did not evaluate the androgynous brand extension that extended from a *masculine* parent brand differently to the manner in which they evaluated the androgynous brand extension introduced from a *feminine* parent brand. Lastly, support was demonstrated for a difference between the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension and the masculine/feminine parent brand (H_{5A}). Particularly, individuals displayed more favourable evaluation scores for the androgynous brand extension than they did for the masculine/feminine parent brand.

The forthcoming section further interprets the findings summarised above. It also advances various conclusions that ensue from them.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

Each of the hypothesised relationships of this study relate to a particular research objective. The six objectives were:

- (1) To determine if gender identity has a direct effect on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension.
- (2) To determine whether the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation is moderated by self-concept.

- (3) To establish if there is a difference between the two product category types in terms of evaluation of the androgynous brand extension.
- (4) To ascertain if there is a difference between the two parent brand genders in terms of the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension.
- (5) To determine whether self-concept has a direct effect on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension.
- (6) To determine whether there is a difference between the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension and the evaluation of a masculine/ feminine parent brand

Conclusions resulting from the findings connected to each of the hypothesised relationships are now presented. Each finding is related to extant literature presented in preceding theory chapters. Thereafter, inferences as to the implications and possible significance of these findings are offered. Following discrete discussions of each hypothesised relationship; conclusions regarding the constructs in a more holistic sense are set forth. The salient proposed relationship amid gender identity and brand extension evaluation is discussed first.

6.3.1 Gender Identity and Brand Extension Evaluation

Gender identity was delineated in Chapter 2 (section 2.4) and was theorised to influence consumption behaviour. The construct was defined as an amalgamation of an individual's physiological gender characteristics, social gender roles and gender orientations (Kacen, 2000; Ye & Robertson, 2012); or the degree to which a person identifies with masculine or feminine personality characteristics (Robbie & Neale, 2012) and expresses the degree of masculinity and femininity that an individual internalizes into their notion of self (Fischer & Arnold, 1994). Gender identity has been shown to a superior predictor of consumer behaviour, within a postmodern context, as compared to biological sex (Robbie & Neale, 2012). Further, extant literature asserts a direct relationship between gender identity and behavioural outcomes, including loyalty, purchase intent, product involvement and response to advertisements (Fischer & Arnold, 1994; Martin & Gnoth, 2009; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012).

The first research objective of this study advocated a direct relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. This hypothesised relationship was supported (see H_{1A} pg. 118). Thus, an individual's gender identity influences the manner in which they evaluate an androgynous brand extension. However, this was only the case for some of the brand extension evaluation dimensions and not for all of them. Particularly, it was supported for: attitude towards the brand extension (H_{1A3}), attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)(H_{1A4}) and brand preference (H_{1A5}). An individual's respective levels of masculinity and femininity therefore influence: the attitude they exhibit towards both the brand extension; as well as the attitude they have towards the original brand following the introduction of such a

brand extension. Likewise, their gender identity affects the brand the individual favours. It can be thus be deduced that gender identity impacts individuals' attitude-based assessments of an androgynous brand extension. The same was observed for the control scenario (see Appendix C). This observation is consistent with prior literature (Frieden, 2013). Thus, marketer's employment of gender identity to explain and predict consumer behaviour is largely substantiated.

However, support was not evidenced for gender identity's influence on perception of overall fit (H_{1A1}), perception of brand image fit (H_{1A2}) and brand preference (H_{1A6}). Therefore, an individual's gender identity does not affect their perceptions of overall or brand image fit amid the original brand and the brand extension, nor does it affect their intentions to acquire an androgynous brand. This is consistent with certain prior studies (Ulrich, 2013). However, it is in contrast to other prior studies (Robbie & Neale, 2012).

In addition to the posited direct effect gender identity would exert on brand extension evaluation, differences were also anticipated between the various gender identity segments and their respective evaluation of the androgynous brand extension. Particularly, it was anticipated (as a result of gender identity congruence theory) that androgynous individuals would display more favourable evaluations of the androgynous brand extension, as compared to all other gender identity segments (H_{1D}). Thus, other gender identity segments, namely: masculine, feminine and undifferentiated individuals would exhibit lower evaluations of the androgynous brand extension, as compared to androgynous individuals (H_{1B} , H_{1C} , and H_{1E} respectively). However, support in favour of this difference was only observed between androgynous and undifferentiated individuals (H_{1D} and H_{1E} , see pg. 119 & 120). Rather, masculine, feminine and androgynous individuals all displayed similar, favourable evaluations of the androgynous brand extension. Undifferentiated individuals still displayed positive evaluations of the androgynous brand extension, even though these responses were significantly lower, as compared to androgynous individuals.

This absence of statistical dissimilar brand extension evaluation scores demonstrated between masculine, feminine and androgynous individuals is likely the result of the high *co-presence* of masculinity and femininity present in the androgynous brand extension. Given this, androgynous individuals identify with the *combination* of the two, and masculine and feminine individuals with the respective levels of masculinity and femininity. As a result of undifferentiated individuals possessing low levels of both masculinity and femininity, it was anticipated that they would not identify *very* strongly with the androgynous brand extension. They thus exhibited statistically different evaluations of the brand extension as compared to androgynous individuals. It is worth noting that androgynous individuals displayed the highest evaluation scores out of all individuals (see table 15, pg. 118), even if these were not *statistically*

different (higher), as compared to those exhibited by masculine or feminine individuals.

Therefore, all gender identity segments evaluated the androgynous brand extension positively, with only one major difference being observed: between androgynous and undifferentiated individuals. This is not altogether unexpected given that androgynous individuals have *high* levels of both masculinity and femininity, while undifferentiated individuals have *low* levels of both. Thus, these individuals are stark contrasts of one another.

Having examined the first research objective, the second and fifth research objectives are now addressed via a discussion regarding self-concept and brand extension evaluation.

6.3.2 Self-Concept and Brand Extension Evaluation

Self-concept was outlined in Chapter 2 (section 2.5) and was posited to influence consumer behaviour. The construct was defined as the manner in which a person perceives himself or herself to be as an individual (Parker, 2009), consisting of two fundamental facets, namely: the “real” or “actual-self” and the “ideal-self” (Aaker, 1999; Abel *et al.*, 2013; Gould, 1991; Graeff, 1996; Sirgy, 1982, 1986; Sutherland *et al.*, 2004; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988). Prior literature has shown that self-concept directs consumer behaviour, affecting purchase decisions, attitudes towards brands, consumer satisfaction, as well as brand preferences (Ebrahim, 2011; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Mehta, 1999; Rhee & Johnson, 2012; Sirgy *et al.*, 1997; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

Two research objectives regarded self-concept, namely the second and fifth research objectives. First, it was postulated that self-concept would exert a direct influence on brand extension evaluation. This hypothesised relationship was supported for both actual and ideal self-concept (see H_{2A}, pg. 121 - 123), with all respective beta values indicating positive relationships between self-concept and evaluation (see Table 18). Thus, the higher the level of perceived similarity between an individual’s perception of himself (whether it be in the present or idealised) and the brand, the higher evaluation scores they will display towards an androgynous brand extension. This observed positive direct relationship is consistent with an abundance of prior studies (Aaker, 1999; Erickson, 1996; Graeff, 1996; Parker, 2005; Sirgy *et al.*, 2000; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Zinkham & Hong, 1991). Consequently, it can be deduced that marketers’ pursuance of self-concept in order to explain and predict consumer behaviour is substantiated.

Second, it was posited that self-concept would moderate the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. This hypothesized relationship was supported (see H_{2C}, pg. 127 - 130). The findings with regard to the moderating effect

of self-concept on the relationship between gender identity (masculinity and femininity) and brand extension evaluation can be summarized as follows:

- Though an individual's gender identity (here level of femininity) influences brand extension evaluation, if they also perceive their *actual* or *idealised* self-image to be closely aligned with the extension's image, then the influence that gender identity exerts on brand extension evaluation becomes slightly weaker.
- Despite the fact that an individual's level of masculinity affects their evaluation of an androgynous brand extension, if that individual perceives there to be a high level of congruity amid their perception of self (actual or ideal) and the androgynous brand extension's image, the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation shifts from being positively related to a negative relationship. Thus, where *prior* to the inclusion of self-concept as a moderator, higher levels of masculinity resulted in higher brand extension evaluation scores, now, *following* its inclusion as a moderator, higher levels of masculinity result in lower brand evaluation scores. Therefore, where a highly masculine individual perceives there to be a high amount of congruency between the androgynous brand extension's image and their own image, they will evaluate the brand extension unfavourably.

To recapitulate, support was evidenced for self-concept exerting a moderating effect on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. In the next section, the role of product category type on brand extension evaluation, the third research objective, is discussed.

6.3.3 Product Category Type and Brand Extension Evaluation

Product category type was delineated in Chapter 3 (section 3.5) and was theorised to affect brand extension evaluation. Namely, different evaluation scores were expected to be observed in accordance with the product category that the brand extension was introduced in, namely: functional or the symbolic product category. The concept of product category was described as being founded on the differentiation of products into two dissimilar sets: products believed to be chiefly utilized as a means to satisfy an instrumental function, and ones predominantly consumed for affective reasons, sensory satisfaction or for pleasure (Tomaseti & Ruiz, 2009; Walpuski, 2010). The former is referred to as functional products, while the latter are called symbolic products (Tomaseti & Ruiz, 2009).

The third research objective of this study suggested key differences between the brand extension evaluation scores in accordance with product category type. This hypothesized difference was supported (see H_{3A}, pg. 133). Thus, individuals evaluate an androgynous brand extension differently depending on whether it is introduced in

the symbolic or the functional product category. Additionally, more favourable responses were observed for the brand extension introduced in the symbolic product category than in the functional category. This observed difference is in alignment with prior literature (Bhat & Reddy, 1998; Friden, 2013; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Leigh & Gabel, 1992). Gender of parent brand and its potential affect on brand extension evaluation is addressed next.

6.3.4. Gender of Parent Brand and Brand Extension Evaluation

Gendered brand image was introduced in Chapter 2 (section 2.7.2). The concept of gendered *parent* brand was delineated in Chapter 3 (sections 3.6) and theorised to affect brand extension evaluation. The fourth research objective concerned potential dissimilarities in brand extension evaluation that would arise as a consequence of the gender of the parent brand. Particularly, it was anticipated that the androgynous brand extension that was introduced from an originally *masculine* parent brand would be more favourably evaluated than the one that was introduced from an originally *feminine* parent brand. This hypothesised difference was not supported (see H_{4A}, pg. 134 & 135). Therefore, individuals did not display significantly different evaluations of an androgynous brand extension according to whether the brand extension was introduced from a masculine or feminine parent brand. This observation differs from prior studies (Jung & Lee, 2006). However, Jung and Lee's (2006) study explored the potential impact of gender of parent brand in a *cross-gender* brand extension context, where the change in gendered brand image is far more drastic than it was in this study.

In fact, the null result at the 5% significance level, observed in this study, may be explained by the fact that an androgynous brand extension is, by definition, defined by a high *co-presence* of masculinity and femininity (Grohmann, 2009). The change in gendered brand image from the masculine or feminine parent brand to the androgynous brand extension is far less drastic than the change in gendered brand image that occurs in a cross-gender brand extension, where the gendered brand image switches to the *opposing* gender. As a result of society possessing very dissimilar regard for masculine and feminine gendered traits (Ashmore *et al.*, 1986), a change to an opposing gendered brand image is expected to yield a noteworthy influence. However, given that in this study the masculine or feminine gendered brand extended to an *androgynous* brand extension, the shift is comparatively less drastic as a certain amount of the original gendered brand image remains in the androgynous brand extension's gendered image, given that it is defined by a high *co-presence* of masculinity and femininity (a duality).

This outcome might be favourable for practitioners. It suggests that managers are not restricted by the current gendered image of their existing brand, as repositioning the brand to be more androgynous was not perceived to be a major shift from the original

brand gender. Rather, it appears that both a masculine and a feminine original brand could lend itself to a successful androgynous brand extension.

6.3.5. Comparison between Parent Brand and Androgynous Brand Extension

Chapter 1 introduced the notion that *androgynous brands* were likely to be favourably evaluated, more so than other gendered brands. This was anticipated to occur on the basis of the progressively increasing amount of androgynous individuals in society, with these individuals being expected to favour androgynous brands (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Kliamenakis, 2011; Robbie & Neale, 2012). It was further enhanced by a general gender identification shift that resulted in a growing appreciation of androgyny by a large majority of society (Fugate & Philips, 2010; Kliamenakis, 2011). Lastly, given its high *co-presence* of masculinity and femininity (Grohmann, 2009) the androgynous brand could thus potentially appeal to masculine and feminine individuals, in addition to androgynous individuals, as they could potentially respond favourably to high levels of congruency between them and the androgynous brand's image (Robbie & Neale, 2012). In contrast, regarding the *masculine or feminine* brand, individuals were expected to display dissimilar (potentially lower) evaluations, as a result of different impressions regarding masculine and feminine traits in society (Ashmore *et al.*, 1986 as cited by Jung & Lee, 2006). The fifth research objective anticipated that the androgynous brand would be evaluated differently to the masculine or feminine parent brand.

This hypothesised difference was supported (see H_{5A}, pg. 136). Therefore, individuals evaluate an androgynous brand extension differently to the way in which they evaluate a masculine or feminine gendered parent brand. Moreover, individuals displayed *more favourable* evaluations of the *androgynous* brand than both the masculine and feminine parent brand.

6.4 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

When cogitated together, the findings with regard the research objectives of this study, contribute towards answering the research questions proposed in chapter 1:

Does gender identity influence an individual's evaluations of an androgynous brand extension? If so, is this relationship impacted by self-concept, product category type or gender of the parent brand?

A direct effect of gender identity on the evaluation of an androgynous brand extension was evidenced. Thus, an individual's gender identity affects the manner in which they assess an androgynous brand extension. This principal finding is in alignment with seminal studies (e.g. Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ye & Robertson, 2012). Furthermore, a supported moderating effect of self-concept on the relationship between gender

identity and brand extension evaluation was evidenced. Particularly, the inclusion of an interaction term in this regard lowered the influence that *femininity* exerted on brand extension evaluation; and changed the relationship (from positive to negatively related) between *masculinity* and brand extension evaluation. Differences in the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension according to product category were confirmed. Thus, the manner in which an individual assesses an androgynous brand extension is influenced by the product category wherein the extension is introduced. Lastly, differences in the evaluation of the androgynous brand extension according to the gender of the parent were not supported. Thus, the gender of the parent brand that the androgynous brand extension is introduced from does not affect the manner in which individuals assess the brand extension.

Taken together, then, in explicitly answering the research questions posed, gender identity *does* influence individuals' evaluations of an androgynous brand extension and this relationship *is* impacted by self-concept and product category type. The theoretical and managerial implications ensuing from this conclusion are discussed in the following section.

6.5 THEORETICAL AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.5.1 Theoretical Implications

This research augments existing literature on brand gender in the following ways: Firstly, there are no studies, to the knowledge of the researcher, that empirically test the influence of gender identity congruity with an androgynous brand extension. Secondly, it assessed the potential moderating effect that self-concept could exert on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation which has yet to be explored within a consumption context. Lastly, it examined differences in evaluations between an androgynous brand extension and a masculine or feminine gendered parent brand.

Given that support was evidenced regarding all three of these novel pursuits, existing understanding of gender identity, self-concept and gendered brand image has been augmented. Future researchers should include both gender identity and self-concept into gendered brand studies given that they were evidenced to exert a *combined influence* (i.e. an interaction between self-concept and gender identity) on consumer behaviour. Moreover, preliminary support of differences in brand evaluation in accordance with androgynous vs. masculine or feminine gendered brand image was evidenced. Particularly, individuals evaluated the androgynous brand more favourably than they evaluated the masculine or feminine brand. Thus, this study introduces preliminary empirical evidence that verifies what has only yet been insinuated in extant literature (i.e. that an androgynous brand is likely to be favourably received and critical to long-term success)(Fugate & Philips, 2010; Kliamenakis, 2011). Future

researchers should examine whether this partiality towards androgynous brands is demonstrated in other contexts.

In contrast to previous literature, the gender of parent brand did not garner support in this study as being an elucidating variable that affects consumer behaviour. This could potentially have arisen from two key factors. Firstly, as noted, an androgynous brand extension is, by definition, characterised by a strong co-presence of masculinity and femininity. Thus, as a result of neither gendered image existing in *isolation*, the effect that a masculine or feminine gendered brand image would typically exert is diminished. Therefore, the change in parent brand measured in this study was more a subtler repositioning of the parent brand as compared to, say, a cross-gender brand extension.

This study informs our comprehension of an androgynous brand extension within a consumer behaviour context. Specifically, it contributes to the literature by providing insight into the manner in which gender identity influences brand extension evaluation. Additionally, it augments this understanding by providing an understanding of certain additional key factors, namely: self-concept, product category type and gender of parent brand. Several potential managerial implications that arise from this study are now discussed.

6.5.2 Managerial Implications

Firstly, marketers should take deliberate steps to benefit from the support that was evidenced regarding gender identity exerting an influence on brand extension evaluation. Practitioners should develop and employ segmentation strategies in accordance with gender identity, reconsidering existing segmentation strategies that may be in accordance with sex (Firat & Venkatesh, 1993; Kacen, 2000; Robbie & Neale, 2012; Ulrich, 2013). Strong connections with an individual's gender identity should also be created via the use of advertisement efforts. Evoking strong connections in this regard will lead to the creation of worthwhile relationships with consumers. Given that *all* four gender identity segments reacted favourably to the androgynous brand extension, firms should attempt to create this connection with more than just the androgynous identity segment. Particular focus should be on androgynous and feminine individuals, given that these individuals exhibited similar evaluations of the androgynous brand extension. Care should be taken, however, with masculine individuals, whose self-image might be congruent with the androgynous brand extension. Undifferentiated individuals also evaluated the androgynous brand extension positively, but they demonstrated significantly lower evaluation scores as compared to androgynous individuals. They should thus be focused on the least out of the four gender identity segments, but not omitted given their favourable responses to the androgynous brand extension. Therefore, brand managers should ensure to stress a *duality* in their positioning – i.e. promote traits such as loyalty or nurturing (feminine) and competitive (masculine) *simultaneously*. Practitioners can imbue their

brands with androgynous brand images through the use of appropriate brand user imagery, brand associations (Aaker 1997), as well as using an appropriate brand spokesperson (Grohmann 2009, 2014). An example of such a spokesperson, for instance, could be a man or a woman, who exhibits both daring and sweet, or both adventurous and graceful personality traits (Kliamenakis, 2011). Other authors have demonstrated that a brand can be imbued with a gendered image through the use of language utilized in advertisements, brand names, marketing campaigns, font type and logo cues (Alreck *et al.*, 1982; Friedman & Dipple, 1978; Fugate & Philips, 2010; Grohmann, 2014; Guevremont & Grohmann, 2015; Worth, Smith & Mackie, 1992).

Certain authors have argued that the introduction of an androgynous brand is critical to long-term success (Fugate & Philips, 2010). This study supports this. Consumers were shown to prefer an androgynous brand to both a masculine and feminine one. This finding held across product categories and occurred for all gender identity segments. Given that the utilitarian dissimilarities amid products and services are progressively eroding, with individuals conducting purchase resolutions relative to product or brand image (Cova, 1996; Parker, 2009), it is vital that brand managers understand brand image and the influence it may exert on consumer behaviour. Moreover, despite the deteriorating dichotomization of men and women in society, gendering brands as masculine or feminine still prevails as one of the most commonly employed strategies to differentiate a brand and appeal to target audiences (Robbie & Neale, 2012; Veg & Nyeck, 2007). This study suggests that an androgynous brand may realize success. Brand managers should therefore consider shifting away from conventional dichotomous gendered image branding and contemplate introducing an androgynous brand.

While an androgynous brand extension was evaluated favourably in both the functional and symbolic product categories, practitioners must keep in mind that an androgynous brand extension is more likely to realise success if it is introduced in a *symbolic* product category. This research employed clothing as its symbolic category. Additional symbolic categories that have been identified in the literature, and which could potentially realise successful introductions of androgynous brand extensions include: fragrances, cosmetics, jewellery, entertainment, alcoholic beverages, fragrances, fashion, hair gel/ sprays, magazines, recreation and travel products (Aaker 1997; Jung & Lee, 2006; Plakoyiannaki & Zotos, 2008). The most obvious direction for application is also the luxury brand segment, given its high implicit level of symbolism (Heine, 2012).

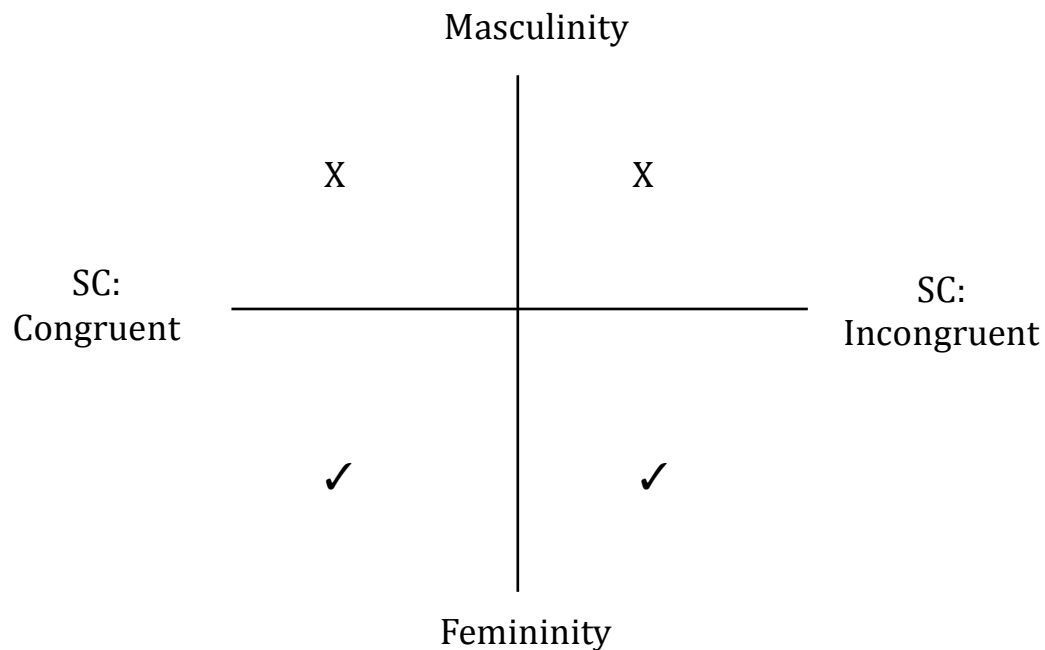
Additionally, managers need not be restricted by the gendered brand image of their existing brand(s) when considering the implementation of an androgynous brand extension. Rather, empirical evidence asserts that the gender of the parent brand is unlikely to exert an influence on individuals' evaluations of an androgynous brand extension. Therefore, regardless of whether existing brand image perceptions of a

firm's current brand(s) happen to be masculine or feminine, they can likely realise a successful introduction of an androgynous brand extension.

Lastly, self-concept was also evidenced as exerting both a direct effect on brand extension evaluation; as well as a moderating influence on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. Regarding the former effect, advertising efforts should attempt to evoke consumer ambition given that *ideal* self-concept (the idealised perception of oneself) was shown to exert a stronger influence on brand extension evaluation. Furthermore, brand managers of *luxury* brands may realise specifically enhanced benefits from this approach, given that luxury consumption is strongly connected to individuals' aspirations (Truong, McColl & Kitchen, 2010). Regarding the latter effect, practitioners must understand that when gender identity and self-concept exert a *combined* influence on the evaluation of a brand extension, this influence is weaker than when they each exert a stand-alone influence on brand extension. Thus, attempts should be made to connect with these two identity aspects *separately*. Certain advertising efforts could promote the identity or image of the brand as discussed previously; while other separate campaigns could evoke perceptions of the self and then attempt to demonstrate how these perceptions were similar to the androgynous brand extension's image. However, should firms need to simultaneously connect with individual's self-concept and gender identity, they should attempt to stress the femininity more than the masculinity of the brand. This is as a result of the finding that self-concept moderated the relationship between masculinity and brand extension evaluation in such a way that changed the direction of the relationship from being a positive to a negative one.

Therefore, managers should exercise caution when appealing to individuals with high levels of masculinity whom also perceive there to be high levels of congruency between their self-image and image of the androgynous brand extension, as they are likely to respond negatively to the brand extension. Rather, they should appeal to individuals with high levels of femininity or those with low levels of masculinity. This is summarised in Figure 3 that follows.

Figure 3: Optimal Conditions for Success Regarding Gender Identity and Self-Concept Interaction



As observed above, managers should focus their efforts on feminine individuals, or masculine individuals who perceive there to be low levels of congruity between themselves and the androgynous brand extension.

The potential inferences of this research outlined above should be interpreted with a distinct understanding as to the limitations of this study that are addressed in the section that follows.

6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The generalizability of the findings of this study is restricted by certain methodological limitations. This study employed a student sample. These students were restricted to a single university, the University of Cape Town. Additionally, this study employed South Africans and did not include an array of individuals from different international locations. Therefore, the first and foremost potential concern of this study relates to the representativeness of the final realised sample given the use of a non-probability sample (Aaker, Kumar & Day, 2008). Although the quota controls employed could have resulted in suitable estimates population parameters this is not necessarily guaranteed as the accuracy of the sample results cannot be objectively assessed (Malhotra, 2010). Possibly mitigating concerns regarding this representativeness of the sample were the presented descriptive statistics that depicted the final realised sample as being aligned with the target population. The final realised sample was exposed as comprising of individuals of an appropriate student age and having attended UCT (section 5.5.1). They were thus deemed Generation Y, university students. Given that the sample size exceeded that of prior comparable

research (n=288) and was well above prescribed minimums necessitated by the employed statistical techniques, the findings of this work can cautiously be generalised outside the parameters of this realised sample, to other contexts.

A second potential restriction relates to the employed product categories of this study. This research utilized clothing to denote the symbolic product category and deodorant to represent the functional category. This decision was motivated after a review of extant literature (section 4.5.1) on the topic and verified within this study. Findings are not necessarily guaranteed to be the same for other products that fall outside clothing or deodorants respectively. Thus, when extrapolating these findings outside of these two product types, managers should exercise caution.

This study employed four brands: Hugo Boss, Chanel, AXE and Dove (section 4.4.2). Thus, while much literature was consulted prior to their selection, the findings of this study might not be transferrable to other contexts beyond these brands and future replication research could extend this theory to other contexts and products.

It is apparent that much remains unknown and consequently future research can continue to expand upon these findings and overcome the limitations encountered in this study. Various suggestions for future research are now provided in the final section of this dissertation.

6.7 FUTURE RESEARCH

This study made a unique contribution to literature in three key manners. Firstly, it examined gender identity congruence with an androgynous brand extension. Secondly, it assessed self-concept as exerting a potential moderating effect on this relationship. Lastly, it explicitly compared brand evaluations of the androgynous brand extension with brand evaluations of the original masculine and feminine brand.

Given that this study was the first to evaluate a potential moderating effect exerted by self-concept and that this moderating influence was supported, a foundation for an array of future studies has thus been established. Future studies can confirm or dispute this and thus augment this preliminary understanding of this moderating influence. Likewise, future studies can assess whether the favourable evaluations demonstrated towards the androgynous brand extension in this study hold across other product categories. Accordingly, they could explore if the above findings hold for other product categories such as, for example, fragrances and cosmetics. Future research could also assess whether the findings from this study hold across age cohorts other than Generation Y. As noted previously (section 4.4), Generation Y was anticipated to display unique consumption behaviours that may not be observed for other age cohorts. Future research can thus comment on whether these findings hold for, say, older generations that are expected to exhibit more gender-congruent buying

behaviour. Future investigations could also compare androgynous brands with masculine and feminine ones to supplement the findings ascertained in this study.

Three additional variables are likely to influence the central relationship explored in this work, namely that between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. These include: consumption situation or conspicuousness, self-monitoring, and additional aspects of self-concept. Consequently, they present various future research opportunities. Each of these is addressed in turn.

Future research endeavours could ascertain whether the consumption situation moderates the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. Consumption situation depicts the private or public context wherein an individual either acquires or uses a brand (Meyers, 2010). Given that individuals employ brands to create and communicate their identities, perhaps the context wherein individuals purchase or use an item, could influence individuals' exhibited evaluations and other behavioural outcomes towards the androgynous brand extension. Perhaps individuals that desire to express something about their identity would evaluate an androgynous brand extension that is designed for *public* use more favourably than one mainly used in *private*. Further, literature outlines consumption situation as dictating whether self-concept affects consumer behaviour (Abel *et al.*, 2013; Parker, 2009). Given this study's finding that self-concept exerts a moderating effect on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation, it seems pertinent to explore a potential interplay amid gender identity, self-concept and consumption situation and their potential influence on consumer behaviour. A contribution to existing literature such as this could further enhance the predictive precision of identity aspects on consumption behaviour.

Similarly, self-monitoring behaviour of an individual may moderate the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. Self-monitoring signifies an individuals' conscious governance and regulation of their behaviour in the presence of others, with their intention being to be regarded in a positive manner, in accordance with the situation (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984; Snyder, 1974). Thus, certain individuals may feel that in a certain situation they would not like to be observed by others purchasing or using an androgynous brand. This could arise as a result of the high co-presence of masculinity and femininity present within the brand. Accordingly, masculine individuals may not want to be seen buying or using such a brand as it is as associated with *feminine* characteristics as much as it is with *masculine* ones. Thus, high self-monitors who may have high levels of congruence between their gender identity and the androgynous brand and who consequently would be expected to exhibit favourable evaluations of it, may actually display lower levels of evaluation in certain circumstances. The same may not be true for a low self-monitor. Hence, self-monitoring might moderate the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. Future research efforts could assess this potential moderating influence.

Lastly, contemporary research has expanded on the notion of self-concept, noting that self-concept can comprise of *four* aspects, namely actual self-concept, ideal self-concept, social self-concept and ideal social self-concept (Achouri & Bouslama, 2010; Jamal & Goode, 2001 as cited by Toth, 2014). Future research could incorporate these additional aspects of self-concept into this study's framework in an endeavour to understand the influence of self-perception and identity on behavioural outcomes more fully. Such a contribution to literature could advance the predictive ability of self-concept regarding consumer behaviour.

6.8 CONCLUSION

This study endeavoured to answer the research questions as to whether gender identity exerted an effect on brand extension evaluation; and whether self-concept, product category type and gender of parent brand influenced this relationship. It also set out to understand potential differences between the evaluation scores of the androgynous brand extension and the masculine or feminine parent brand. This study found support for a main direct effect of gender identity on brand extension evaluation. It also found support for both a direct effect of self-concept on brand extension evaluation; as well as a moderating effect of self-concept on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation. The study found support for a significant difference in brand extension evaluation in accordance with product category type. It also found support for a significant difference in brand evaluation scores when comparing the androgynous brand extension with the masculine/ feminine parent brand. Lastly, no support was found regarding a difference in brand extension evaluation in accordance with gender of parent brand.

This final chapter began by providing a brief overview of the study to facilitate the discussions that were to follow. Thereafter, it presented conclusions regarding each of the key relationships examined in this study. Following this, results were assessed from a more holistic perspective and an overall principal conclusion was deduced as shown in the above paragraph. Broad theoretical and managerial implications ensuing from this research were then offered. The penultimate section then addressed several methodological limitations that the reader must be conscious of when cogitating the implications and recommendations outlined in this chapter. This dissertation then concluded by suggesting numerous potential avenues for future research.

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APPENDIX A – MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

TREATMENT 1 – HUGO BOSS

**SYMBOLIC PRODUCT CATEGORY
MASCULINE PARENT BRAND**



Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire will present you with two different scenarios and then ask you questions pertaining to the two. It will take no longer than **10 – 15 minutes** to complete. This research has been approved by the Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee. All answers will remain both **anonymous** and **confidential**. There is no right or wrong answer. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You can decide to withdraw from the research at any point. By completing this survey you have implicitly indicated consent to participate in this research project. Please make sure you answer **ALL** the questions in the questionnaire. If you have any queries, or require any additional information regarding this study please contact the researcher: astridringas@live.co.za.

FILTER QUESTION

1. Are you aware of the brand HUGO BOSS?

- ☐ **Yes** - Please continue with this questionnaire
- ☐ **No** - You do not have to complete this questionnaire: thank you for your time

Please rate yourself according to how the following **adjectives describe you**. If the adjective is very true of you please circle "7" (always/ almost always true). If the adjective does not describe you at all then please circle "1" (never/ almost never true). Circle a number between "1" and "7" if the adjective describes you a manner that falls between the extremes. There is no right or wrong answer.

Please rate yourself according to how the following adjectives describe you:	Never/ Almost Never True (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Always/ Almost Always True (7)
2. Affectionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Assertive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Gentle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Loyal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Acts like a leader	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Has a strong personality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Willing to take a stand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Forceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Eager to soothe hurt feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Has leadership abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Sensitive to others' needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

21. Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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* You will now be presented with a **scenario**. Please bear this scenario in mind when answering questions 22 - 60 that follow.

SCENARIO 1							
"HUGO BOSS is a successful, high-end fashion brand created for men. Its range consists of: tailored clothing, casual or sportswear and shoes and accessories. Specific items from each range include: Swimwear, T-Shirts, Suits, Dress Shirts, Jackets, Coats, Watches, Sunglasses, Scarves, Gloves"							

Please rate how well the following **adjectives describe HUGO BOSS**. If the adjective is very true of the brand please circle "7" (always/ almost always true). If the adjective does not describe it at all then please circle "1" (never/ almost never true).

Please rate how well the following adjectives describe HUGO BOSS :	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Much (7)
22. Adventurous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Sweet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Daring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Graceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. Brave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Expresses tender feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Fragile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. Sturdy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. Sensitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please state your level of agreement with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree (7)
34. When I purchase clothes like these, I take product FUNCTIONS into account	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. When I purchase clothes like these, I take product QUALITY into account	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. When I purchase clothing, I consider whether or not the product FITS MY IMAGE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. When I purchase clothing, I consider whether or not the product will CATCH OTHERS' ATTENTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. This brand is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. This brand is NOT consistent with how I see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. I do NOT feel a close personal connection to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. This brand is NOT very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

43. This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. I often use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

47. Rate the degree of **FUNCTIONALITY** of high-end fashion clothing

Not at all functional (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very functional (7)
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48. Rate the degree of **PRESTIGE** of high-end fashion clothing

Not at all prestige (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very prestige (7)
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Rate your familiarity with the following:	Not at all familiar (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very familiar (7)
49. Clothing/ Fashion as a product category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. HUGO BOSS as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your attitude:	Bad (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Good (7)
51. Towards clothing/ fashion as a product category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. Towards HUGO BOSS as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Express how you feel about:	Dislike (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Like (7)
53. Clothes / fashion in general	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. HUGO BOSS as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your feelings:	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
55. What is your opinion about clothes/ fashion?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. How would you rate Hugo BOSS as a brand overall?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

57. Please rate **HUGO BOSS** accordingly:

Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Good (7)
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58. How would you score **HUGO BOSS** overall?

Very Unsatisfactory (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Satisfactory (7)
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Indicate the following:	Very Unlikely (1)	2	3	4	Very Likely (5)
59. How likely is it that you would contemplate buying HUGO BOSS at some stage?	1	2	3	4	5
60. How probable is it that you would purchase HUGO BOSS if you could afford it?	1	2	3	4	5

* You will now be exposed to **another scenario**. Please study the scenario and then answer questions 61 – 91 below.

SCENARIO 2
“Expanding on its expertise and success as a high-end fashion label for men, HUGO BOSS introduces a new unisex clothing range! In other words, a range suited to both men and women. Some items from this range include: Scarves, Gloves, Shirts, Jackets, Jerseys ”

Please answer questions 61 - 91 based on Scenario 2.

Indicate your level of agreement (or lack thereof) with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree (7)
61. This brand is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62. This brand is NOT consistent with how I see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63. I do NOT feel a close connection to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64. This brand is NOT very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65. I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66. This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67. I use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68. This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your level of agreement (or lack thereof) with the following statements:	Not at all True (1)	2	3	4	Very True (5)
70. This introduction makes sense	1	2	3	4	5
71. The extension seems logical	1	2	3	4	5
72. The extension would be a good example of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
73. The extension would be typical of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
74. The extension fits my ideas	1	2	3	4	5
75. The extension fits my image	1	2	3	4	5
76. The extension has a similar image to me	1	2	3	4	5
77. The extension conveys similar impressions to me	1	2	3	4	5
78. The user of the extension is as stylish as the user of the parent brand (HUGO BOSS for men only)	1	2	3	4	5
79. The extension makes the same statements about users as the parent brand	1	2	3	4	5
80. The extension is as practical as the parent brand	1	2	3	4	5

Rate your attitude towards ...	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
81. Rate your attitude towards the EXTENSION (HUGO BOSS unisex range)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
82. Rate your attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please state your level of agreement with the following questions:	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
83. Rate your feelings towards the new clothing line	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
84. Now that you have heard about the unisex line what is your attitude towards HUGO BOSS?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Rate your attitude towards ...	Dislike (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Like (7)
85. Please rate your attitude towards this HUGO BOSS unisex extension	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
86. Rate your feelings towards HUGO BOSS now that they have introduced this new line	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

87. How do you rate this extension?

Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Good (7)
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88. How would you describe this extension?

Very Unsatisfactory (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Satisfactory (7)
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89. How likely is it that you would buy an item from this clothing line (if you could afford it)?

Very Unlikely(1)	2	3	4	Very Likely (5)
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90. What is the likelihood of you contemplating buying from this HUGO BOSS range in the future?

Improbable (1)	2	3	4	Probable (5)
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DEMOGRAPHICS

91. What is your age? _____(years)

92. Please indicate your biological sex:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

THE END

Thank you for participating in this study!

TREATMENT 2 – CHANEL

**SYMBOLIC PRODUCT CATEGORY
FEMININE PARENT BRAND**



Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire will present you with two different scenarios and then ask you questions pertaining to the two. It will take no longer than **10 – 15 minutes** to complete. This research has been approved by the Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee. All answers will remain both **anonymous** and **confidential**. There is no right or wrong answer. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You can decide to withdraw from the research at any point. By completing this survey you have implicitly indicated consent to participate in this research project. Please make sure you answer **ALL** the questions in the questionnaire. If you have any queries, or require any additional information regarding this study please contact the researcher: astridringas@live.co.za.

FILTER QUESTION

1. Are you aware of the brand **Chanel**?

- ☐ **Yes** - Please continue with this questionnaire
- ☐ **No** - You do not have to complete this questionnaire: thank you for your time

Please rate yourself according to how the following **adjectives describe you**. If the adjective is very true of you please circle "7" (always/ almost always true). If the adjective does not describe you at all then please circle "1" (never/ almost never true). Circle a number between "1" and "7" if the adjective describes you a manner that falls between the extremes. There is no right or wrong answer.

Please rate yourself according to how the following adjectives describe you:	Never/ Almost Never True (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Always/ Almost Always True (7)
2. Affectionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Assertive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Gentle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Loyal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Acts like a leader	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Has a strong personality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Willing to take a stand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Forceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Eager to soothe hurt feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Has leadership abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Sensitive to others' needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

21. Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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* You will now be presented with a **scenario**. Please bear this scenario in mind when answering questions 22 - 60 that follow.

SCENARIO 1							
"Chanel is a successful, high-end fashion brand created for women. Its range consists of: tailored clothing, casual or sportswear and shoes and accessories. Specific items from each range include: suits, shirts, jackets, dresses, skirts, coats, watches, sunglasses, scarves, gloves"							

Please rate how well the following **adjectives describe CHANEL**. If the adjective is very true of the brand please circle "7" (always/ almost always true). If the adjective does not describe it at all then please circle "1" (never/ almost never true).

Please rate how well the following adjectives describe CHANEL :	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Much (7)
22. Adventurous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Sweet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Daring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Graceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. Brave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Expresses tender feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Fragile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. Sturdy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. Sensitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please state your level of agreement with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree (7)
34. When I purchase clothes like these, I take product FUNCTIONS into account	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. When I purchase clothes like these, I take product QUALITY into account	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. When I purchase clothing, I consider whether or not the product FITS MY IMAGE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. When I purchase clothing, I consider whether or not the product will CATCH OTHERS' ATTENTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. This brand is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. This brand is NOT consistent with how I see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. I do NOT feel a close personal connection to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. This brand is NOT very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

43. This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. I often use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

47. Rate the degree of **FUNCTIONALITY** of high-end fashion clothing

Not at all functional (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very functional (7)
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48. Rate the degree of **PRESTIGE** of high-end fashion clothing

Not at all prestige (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very prestige (7)
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Rate your familiarity with the following:	Not at all familiar (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very familiar (7)
49. Clothing/ Fashion as a product category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. CHANEL as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your attitude:	Bad (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Good (7)
51. Towards clothing/ fashion as a product category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. Towards CHANEL as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your attitude:	Dislike (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Like (7)
53. Clothes / fashion in general	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. CHANEL as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your attitude:	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
55. What is your opinion about clothes/ fashion?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. How would you rate Chanel as a brand overall?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

57. Please rate **CHANEL** accordingly:

Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Good (7)
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58. How would you score **CHANEL** overall?

Very Unsatisfactory (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Satisfactory (7)
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Indicate the following:	Very Unlikely (1)	2	3	4	Very Likely (7)
59. How likely is it that you would contemplate buying CHANEL at some stage?	1	2	3	4	5
60. How probable is it that you would purchase CHANEL if you could afford it?	1	2	3	4	5

* You will now be exposed to **another scenario**. Please study the scenario and then answer questions 61 – 91 below.

SCENARIO 2
“Expanding on its expertise and success as a high-end fashion label for women, CHANEL introduces a new unisex clothing range! In other words, a range suited to both men and women. Some items from this range include: Scarves, Gloves, Shirts, Jackets, Jerseys ”

Please answer questions 61 - 91 based on Scenario 2.

Indicate your level of agreement (or lack thereof) with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree (7)
61. This brand is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62. This brand is NOT consistent with how I see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63. I do NOT feel a close connection to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64. This brand is NOT very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65. I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66. This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67. I use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68. This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your level of agreement (or lack thereof) with the following statements:	Not at all True (1)	2	3	4	Very True (5)
70. This introduction makes sense	1	2	3	4	5
71. The extension seems logical	1	2	3	4	5
72. The extension would be a good example of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
73. The extension would be typical of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
74. The extension fits my ideas	1	2	3	4	5
75. The extension fits my image	1	2	3	4	5
76. The extension has a similar image to me	1	2	3	4	5
77. The extension conveys similar impressions to me	1	2	3	4	5
78. The user of the extension is as stylish as the user of the parent brand (CHANEL for women only)	1	2	3	4	5
79. The extension makes the same statements about users as the parent brand	1	2	3	4	5
80. The extension is as practical as the parent brand	1	2	3	4	5

Rate your attitude towards ...	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
81. Rate your attitude towards the EXTENSION (CHANEL unisex range)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
82. Rate your attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please state your level of agreement with the following questions:	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
83. Rate your feelings towards the new clothing line	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
84. Now that you have heard about the unisex line what is your attitude towards CHANEL?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Rate your attitude towards ...	Dislike (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Like (7)
85. Please rate your attitude towards this CHANEL unisex extension	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
86. Rate your feelings towards CHANEL now that they have introduced this new line	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

87. How do you rate this extension?

Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Good (7)
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88. How would you describe this extension?

Very Unsatisfactory (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Satisfactory (7)
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89. How likely is it that you would buy an item from this clothing line (if you could afford it)?

Very Unlikely(1)	2	3	4	Very Likely (5)
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90. What is the likelihood of you contemplating buying from this CHANEL range in the future?

Improbable (1)	2	3	4	Probable (5)
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DEMOGRAPHICS

91. What is your age? _____(years)

92. Please indicate your biological sex:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

THE END

Thank you for participating in this study!

TREATMENT 3 – DOVE

**FUNCTIONAL PRODUCT CATEGORY
FEMININE PARENT BRAND**



Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire will present you with two different scenarios and then ask you questions pertaining to the two. It will take no longer than **10 – 15 minutes** to complete. This research has been approved by the Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee. All answers will remain both **anonymous** and **confidential**. There is no right or wrong answer. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You can decide to withdraw from the research at any point. By completing this survey you have implicitly indicated consent to participate in this research project. Please make sure you answer **ALL** the questions in the questionnaire. If you have any queries, or require any additional information regarding this study please contact the researcher: astridringas@live.co.za.

FILTER QUESTION

1. Are you aware of the brand **Dove**?

- ☐ **Yes** - Please continue with this questionnaire
- ☐ **No** - You do not have to complete this questionnaire: thank you for your time

Please rate yourself according to how the following **adjectives describe you**. If the adjective is very true of you please circle "7" (always/ almost always true). If the adjective does not describe you at all then please circle "1" (never/ almost never true). Circle a number between "1" and "7" if the adjective describes you a manner that falls between the extremes. There is no right or wrong answer.

Please rate yourself according to how the following adjectives describe you:	Never/ Almost Never True (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Always/ Almost Always True (7)
2. Affectionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Assertive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Gentle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Loyal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Acts like a leader	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Has a strong personality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Willing to take a stand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Forceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Eager to soothe hurt feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Has leadership abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Sensitive to others' needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

21. Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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* You will now be presented with a **scenario**. Please bear this scenario in mind when answering **questions 22 - 60** that follow.

SCENARIO 1							
"Dove is a leading brand within the deodorant category, created for women. It is dermalogically tested, hypoallergenic and does not leave stains on clothing."							

Please rate how well the following **adjectives describe DOVE**. If the adjective is very true of the brand please circle "7" (always/ almost always true). If the adjective does not describe it at all then please circle "1" (never/ almost never true).

Please rate how well the following adjectives describe DOVE :	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Much (7)
22. Adventurous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Sweet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Daring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Graceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. Brave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Expresses tender feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Fragile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. Sturdy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. Sensitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please state your level of agreement with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree (7)
34. When I purchase deodorants like these, I take product FUNCTIONS into account	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. When I purchase deodorants like these, I take product QUALITY into account	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. When I purchase deodorants, I consider whether or not the product FITS MY IMAGE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. When I purchase deodorants, I consider whether or not the product will CATCH OTHERS' ATTENTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. This brand is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. This brand is NOT consistent with how I see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. I do NOT feel a close personal connection to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. This brand is NOT very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

43. This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. I often use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

47. Rate the degree of **FUNCTIONALITY** of deodorants:

Not at all functional (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very functional (7)
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48. Rate the degree of **PRESTIGE** of deodorants:

Not at all prestige (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very prestige (7)
-------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

Rate your <i>familiarity</i> with the following:	Not at all familiar (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very familiar (7)
49. Deodorants as a product category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. DOVE as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your attitude:	Bad (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Good (7)
51. Towards deodorants as a product category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. Towards DOVE as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Express how you <i>feel</i> about:	Dislike (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Like (7)
53. Deodorants in general	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. DOVE as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your feelings:	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
55. What is your opinion about deodorant?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. How would you rate Dove as a brand overall?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

57. Please rate **DOVE** accordingly:

Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Good (7)
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58. How would you score **DOVE** overall?

Very Unsatisfactory (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Satisfactory (7)
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Indicate the following:	Very Unlike ly (1)	2	3	4	Very Likely (5)
59. How likely is it that you would contemplate buying DOVE at some stage?	1	2	3	4	5
60. How probable is it that you would purchase DOVE?	1	2	3	4	5

* You will now be exposed to **another scenario**. Please study the scenario and then answer questions 61 – 91 below.

SCENARIO 2
<p>"Building on its strong expertise and success in the deodorant product range for females, DOVE introduces a new unisex deodorant! In other words, a range suited to both men and women. The new range is available in four new scents. It blocks odours and leaves no patches on clothing. *dermologically tested *hypoallergenic."</p>

Please answer questions 61 - 91 based on Scenario 2.

Indicate your level of agreement (or lack thereof) with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree (7)
61. This brand is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62. This brand is NOT consistent with how I see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63. I do NOT feel a close connection to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64. This brand is NOT very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65. I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66. This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67. I use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68. This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your level of agreement (or lack thereof) with the following statements:	Not at all True (1)	2	3	4	Very True (5)
70. This introduction makes sense	1	2	3	4	5
71. The extension seems logical	1	2	3	4	5
72. The extension would be a good example of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
73. The extension would be typical of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
74. The extension fits my ideas	1	2	3	4	5
75. The extension fits my image	1	2	3	4	5
76. The extension has a similar image to me	1	2	3	4	5
77. The extension conveys similar impressions to me	1	2	3	4	5
78. The user of the extension is as stylish as the user of the parent brand (DOVE for women only)	1	2	3	4	5
79. The extension makes the same statements about users as the parent brand	1	2	3	4	5
80. The extension is as practical as the parent brand	1	2	3	4	5

Rate your attitude towards ...	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
81. Rate your attitude towards the EXTENSION (DOVE unisex range)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
82. Rate your attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please state your level of agreement with the following questions:	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
83. Rate your feelings towards the new deodorant range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
84. Now that you have heard about the unisex range what is your attitude towards DOVE?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Rate your attitude towards ...	Dislike (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Like (7)
85. Please rate your attitude towards this DOVE unisex extension	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
86. Rate your feelings towards DOVE now that they have introduced this new line	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

87. How do you rate this extension?

Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Good (7)
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88. How would you describe this extension?

Very Unsatisfactory (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Satisfactory (7)
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89. How likely is it that you would buy an item from this deodorant range?

Very Unlikely(1)	2	3	4	Very Likely (5)
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90. What is the likelihood of you contemplating buying from this unisex DOVE range in the future?

Improbable (1)	2	3	4	Probable (5)
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DEMOGRAPHICS

91. What is your age? _____(years)

92. Please indicate your biological sex:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

THE END

Thank you for participating in this study!

TREATMENT 4 – AXE

**FUNCTIONAL PRODUCT CATEGORY
MASCULINE PARENT BRAND**



Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire will present you with two different scenarios and then ask you questions pertaining to the two. It will take no longer than **10 – 15 minutes** to complete. This research has been approved by the Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee. All answers will remain both **anonymous** and **confidential**. There is no right or wrong answer. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You can decide to withdraw from the research at any point. By completing this survey you have implicitly indicated consent to participate in this research project. Please make sure you answer **ALL** the questions in the questionnaire. If you have any queries, or require any additional information regarding this study please contact the researcher: astridringas@live.co.za.

FILTER QUESTION

1. Are you aware of the brand **AXE**?

- ☐ **Yes** - Please continue with this questionnaire
- ☐ **No** - You do not have to complete this questionnaire: thank you for your time

Please rate yourself according to how the following **adjectives describe you**. If the adjective is very true of you please circle "7" (always/ almost always true). If the adjective does not describe you at all then please circle "1" (never/ almost never true). Circle a number between "1" and "7" if the adjective describes you a manner that falls between the extremes. There is no right or wrong answer.

Please rate yourself according to how the following adjectives describe you:	Never/ Almost Never True (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Always/ Almost Always True (7)
2. Affectionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Assertive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Gentle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Loyal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Acts like a leader	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Has a strong personality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Willing to take a stand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Forceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Eager to soothe hurt feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Has leadership abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Sensitive to others' needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

21. Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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* You will now be presented with a **scenario**. Please bear this scenario in mind when answering **questions 22 - 60** that follow.

SCENARIO 1							
"AXE is a leading brand within the deodorant category, created for men. It is dermatologically tested, hypoallergenic and does not leave stains on clothing."							

Please rate how well the following **adjectives describe AXE**. If the adjective is very true of the brand please circle "7" (always/ almost always true). If the adjective does not describe it at all then please circle "1" (never/ almost never true).

Please rate how well the following adjectives describe AXE :	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Much (7)
22. Adventurous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Sweet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Daring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Graceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. Brave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Expresses tender feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. Aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Fragile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. Dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. Sturdy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. Sensitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please state your level of agreement with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree (7)
34. When I purchase deodorants like these, I take product FUNCTIONS into account	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. When I purchase deodorants like these, I take product QUALITY into account	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. When I purchase deodorants, I consider whether or not the product FITS MY IMAGE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. When I purchase deodorants, I consider whether or not the product will CATCH OTHERS' ATTENTION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. This brand is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. This brand is NOT consistent with how I see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. I do NOT feel a close personal connection to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. This brand is NOT very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

43. This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. I often use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

47. Rate the degree of **FUNCTIONALITY** of deodorants:

Not at all functional (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very functional (7)
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48. Rate the degree of **PRESTIGE** of deodorants:

Not at all prestige (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very prestige (7)
-------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

Rate your familiarity with the following:	Not at all familiar (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very familiar (7)
49. Deodorants as a product category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. AXE as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your attitude:	Bad (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Good (7)
51. Towards deodorants as a product category	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. Towards AXE as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Express how you feel about:	Dislike (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Like (7)
53. Deodorants in general	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. AXE as a brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your feelings:	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
55. What is your opinion about deodorants?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. How would you rate AXE as a brand overall?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

57. Please rate **AXE** accordingly:

Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Good (7)
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

58. How would you score **AXE** overall?

Very Unsatisfactory (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Satisfactory (7)
-------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------------

Indicate the following:	Very Unlikely (1)	2	3	4	Very Likely (5)
59. How likely is it that you would contemplate buying AXE at some stage?	1	2	3	4	5
60. How probable is it that you would purchase AXE?	1	2	3	4	5

* You will now be exposed to **another scenario**. Please study the scenario and then answer questions 61 – 91 below.

SCENARIO 2
<p>"Building on its strong expertise and success in the deodorant product range for males, AXE introduces a new unisex deodorant! In other words, a range suited to both men and women. The new range is available in four new scents. It blocks odours and leaves no patches on clothing. *dermally tested *hypoallergenic."</p>

Please answer questions 61 - 91 based on Scenario 2.

Indicate your level of agreement (or lack thereof) with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree (7)
61. This brand is similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62. This brand is NOT consistent with how I see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63. I do NOT feel a close connection to this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64. This brand is NOT very much like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65. I often use this brand because I want to become like someone who wears this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66. This brand reflects the type of person who I like to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67. I use this brand to let people know what kind of person I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68. This brand is consistent with how I like to see myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69. I try to project a certain image of myself to others through this brand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Indicate your level of agreement (or lack thereof) with the following statements:	Not at all True (1)	2	3	4	Very True (5)
70. This introduction makes sense	1	2	3	4	5
71. The extension seems logical	1	2	3	4	5
72. The extension would be a good example of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
73. The extension would be typical of the brand	1	2	3	4	5
74. The extension fits my ideas	1	2	3	4	5
75. The extension fits my image	1	2	3	4	5
76. The extension has a similar image to me	1	2	3	4	5
77. The extension conveys similar impressions to me	1	2	3	4	5
78. The user of the extension is as stylish as the user of the parent brand (AXE for men only)	1	2	3	4	5
79. The extension makes the same statements about users as the parent brand	1	2	3	4	5
80. The extension is as practical as the parent brand	1	2	3	4	5

Rate your attitude towards ...	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
81. Rate your attitude towards the EXTENSION (AXE unisex range)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
82. Rate your attitude towards the original brand (post-extension)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Please state your level of agreement with the following questions:	Negative (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Positive (7)
83. Rate your feelings towards the new deodorant range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
84. Now that you have heard about the unisex range what is your attitude towards AXE?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Rate your attitude towards ...	Dislike (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Like (7)
85. Please rate your attitude towards this AXE unisex extension	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
86. Rate your feelings towards AXE now that they have introduced this new line	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

87. How do you rate this extension?

Very Poor (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Good (7)
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

88. How would you describe this extension?

Very Unsatisfactory (1)	2	3	4	5	6	Very Satisfactory (7)
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89. How likely is it that you would buy an item from this deodorant range?

Very Unlikely(1)	2	3	4	Very Likely (5)
------------------	---	---	---	-----------------

90. What is the likelihood of you contemplating buying from this unisex AXE range in the future?

Improbable (1)	2	3	4	Probable (5)
----------------	---	---	---	--------------

DEMOGRAPHICS

91. What is your age? _____(years)

92. Please indicate your biological sex:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

THE END

Thank you for participating in this study!

**APPENDIX B – CLEARANCE FROM COMMERCE FACULTY
ETHICS COMMITTEE**



Faculty of Commerce
Ethics in Research Committee
Courier: Room 2.21 Leslie Commerce Building Upper Campus University of Cape Town
Post: University of Cape Town • Private Bag • Rondebosch 7701
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June 12, 2014

Astrid Ringas
Management Studies

Project title:

**EVALUATING AN ANDROGYNOUS BRAND EXTENSION: THE GENDER IDENTITY/ GENDERED BRAND
RELATIONSHIP AND INFLUENCING FACTORS**

Dear Researcher,

This letter serves to confirm that this project as described in your submitted protocol has been approved.

Please note that if you make any substantial change in your research procedure that could affect the experiences of the participants, you must submit a revised protocol to the Committee for approval.

Regards,

Harold Kincaid

Professor Harold Kincaid
Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee

APPENDIX C – SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR CONTROL SCENARIO

1. RESULTS OF THE CONTROL SCENARIO

Chapter 5 (section 5.7.2.5) noted that the findings regarding all key constructs with respect to the control scenario would be presented. To recap, the control scenario refers to the original masculine or feminine parent brand that respondents evaluated prior to being introduced to the androgynous brand extension. Given that the investigation of all chief constructs' influence on brand evaluation regarding the original brand was somewhat out of the scope of this work, but given that the outcomes still make for interesting commentary, it was deemed appropriate to include these findings.

This section adheres to the same general structure employed in Chapter 5 for presenting the results, however to aid readability, only the summary tables accompanied by very succinct descriptions as well as comparisons with the findings regarding the androgynous brand extension are provided. Accordingly, the findings concerning gender identity and the control scenario are forwarded first. Thereafter, the results regarding self-concept are presented. The penultimate section sets forth the findings concerning product category. Lastly, the results regarding gender of the brand are forwarded.

1.1.GENDER IDENTITY AND BRAND EVALUATION

The findings regarding gender identity's influence on brand evaluation is depicted in Table 28 below.

Table 28: Gender Identity and Brand Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	F	P-Value	Sig?
Attitude towards the brand	ANOVA	3.74	0.01	✓
Brand preference		3.32	0.02	✓
Purchase Intent		1.06	0.37	x
Overall evaluation		2.88	0.04	✓

Dependent variable = Brand Evaluation

Gender identity's potential influence on brand evaluation of the parent brand was assessed using ANOVA. As observed above, gender identity was evidenced to influence: attitude towards the brand, brand preference and overall evaluation. It did not affect purchase intent. These findings mirror those observed for the androgynous brand extension, where gender identity was found to affect these same variables and not purchase intent. A post-hoc analysis (Tukey) was conducted to assess where these differences between gender identity segments existed.

1.1.1 Differences in Brand Evaluation Between Gender Identity Segments

Differences between gender identity segments that were evidenced for the parent brand are summarised in Table 29 below.

Table 29: Group Differences in Parent Brand Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	Group with Group	P-Value	Sig?	Mean Diff. (MD)
Attitude towards the brand	Tukey	Feminine vs. Undifferentiated	0.04	✓	0.55
		Androgynous vs. Undifferentiated	0.03	✓	0.54

Dependent variable = Brand Evaluation

Differences were observed regarding attitude towards the brand, between feminine and undifferentiated individuals, as well as between androgynous and undifferentiated individuals. Regarding the former, feminine individuals displayed higher evaluation scores than undifferentiated individuals did (MD=0.55). Concerning the latter, androgynous individuals exhibited higher evaluation scores than undifferentiated individuals (MD= 0.54). The latter mirrors the findings regarding the androgynous brand extension where androgynous individuals displayed higher evaluations of the brand extension than undifferentiated individuals.

Having addressed gender identity and its affect on brand evaluation, it is now necessary to investigate self-concept in a similar manner.

1.2 SELF-CONCEPT AND BRAND EVALUATION

A summary of the results concerning self-concept's potential influence on brand evaluation is provided in Table 30 below. This potential influence was tested for using linear regression.

Table 30: Actual and Ideal Self-Concept and Brand Evaluation

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	Self-Concept	F	P-Value	Sig?	Beta	Model fit
Attitude towards the brand	Linear Regression	Actual	33.77	0.00	✓	0.33	0.11
		Ideal	22.09	0.00	✓	0.27	0.08
Brand Preference		Actual	24.17	0.00	✓	0.28	0.08
		Ideal	13.77	0.04	✓	0.21	0.05
Purchase Intent		Actual	74.06	0.00	✓	0.45	0.21
		Ideal	56.43	0.00	✓	0.41	0.17

Overall Evaluation		Actual	70.02	0.00	✓	0.44	0.20
		Ideal	47.71	0.00	✓	0.38	0.14

Dependent variable = Brand Evaluation

As observed above, self-concept influenced all dimensions of brand evaluation as well as the overall evaluation (an aggregate of each evaluation dimension). Furthermore, actual self-concept exerted a stronger influence on the evaluation of the original brand than ideal self-concept. The former finding mirrors that of the androgynous brand extension where self-concept was also found to affect all dimensions of evaluation. The latter, however, differs from the findings in the main study where *ideal* self-concept was found to exert a stronger influence on evaluation than actual self-concept.

A potential moderating effect that self-concept exerted on the relationship between gender identity and brand evaluation of the parent brand was also assessed.

1.2.1 Self-Concept As Moderator

A potential moderating effect of self-concept on the relationship between gender identity and brand extension evaluation was investigated via the use of the Interaction Effect Method and linear regression. The results are summarised in Table 31 below with respect to the interaction term created between masculinity and femininity and actual and ideal self-concept.

Table 31: Self-Concept as a Potential Moderator

Term	Test Employed	Aspect of Evaluation	P-Value	Sig?	F
Fem*ActualSC	Interaction Effect Method and Linear Regression	Attitude towards brand	0.00	✓	15.31
		Brand preference	0.00	✓	11.21
		Purchase Intent	0.00	✓	26.20
		Overall Evaluation	0.00	✓	27.54
Fem*IdealSC		Attitude towards brand	0.00	✓	13.45
		Brand preference	0.00	✓	9.33
		Purchase Intent	0.00	✓	21.97
		Overall Evaluation	0.00	✓	22.76
Masc*ActualSC		Attitude towards brand	0.00	✓	12.03
		Brand preference	0.00	✓	8.98
		Purchase Intent	0.00	✓	25.14
		Overall Evaluation	0.00	✓	24.30
Masc*IdealSC	Attitude towards brand	0.00	✓	8.30	

		Brand preference	0.00	✓	5.95
		Purchase Intent	0.00	✓	18.81
		Overall Evaluation	0.00	✓	16.61

Dependent variable = Brand Evaluation

As observed above, self-concept moderated the relationship between gender identity (operationalized as masculinity/femininity) and brand evaluation for all dimensions of brand evaluation and evaluation overall. The findings concerning potential differences between the two product categories are set forth next.

1.3 PRODUCT CATEGORY AND BRAND EVALUATION

A potential difference in brand evaluation between the two product category types was investigated via the use of independent samples t-tests (Pallant, 2013). The results are summarised in Table 32 below.

Table 32: Differences in Accordance with Product Category Type

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	<i>t</i>	P-Value	Sig?	Means	Mean diff.
Attitude towards the brand	Independent Samples T-Test	2.48	0.01	✓	(F) 5.13 (S) 5.03	3.56
Brand preference		0.84	0.40	x	5.64 5.18	0.11
Purchase Intent		1.48	0.14	x	4.72 4.14	-0.33
Overall evaluation		0.31	0.76	x	4.79	0.43

Dependent variable = Brand Evaluation

As observed in Table 30, a significant difference was only observed between the two product category types for attitude towards the brand. This is in contrast to the findings concerning the androgynous brand extension where differences were observed for all aspects of evaluation. A further difference is that for the parent brand higher evaluation scores were demonstrated for the functional product category, whereas higher scores were exhibited for the symbolic product category for the androgynous brand extension. The results concerning potential differences in brand evaluation according to the gender of the brand are now presented.

1.4 GENDER OF BRAND AND BRAND EVALUATION

A potential difference in brand evaluation between the two brand genders was investigated via the use of independent samples t-tests (Pallant, 2013). The results are summarised in Table 33 below.

Table 33: Differences in Brand Evaluation in Accordance with Brand Gender

Aspect of Evaluation	Test Employed	<i>t</i>	P-Value	Sig?	Means	Mean diff.
Attitude towards the brand	Independent samples T-Test	-0.68	0.50	X	(M) 5.03	-0.10
					(F) 5.13	
Brand preference		-3.64	0.00	✓	5.18	-0.45
					5.64	
Purchase Intent		-2.67	0.00	✓	4.14	-0.60
					4.72	
Overall evaluation		-2.78	0.00	✓	4.79	-0.38
					5.20	

Dependent variable = Brand Evaluation

Differences were observed for all aspects of brand evaluation as well as overall brand evaluation, but not for attitude towards the brand where no difference was observed. These findings are in contrast to the androgynous brand extension where no differences were observed in evaluation in accordance with the gender of the brand.

1.5 CONCLUSIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIPS REGARDING THE CONTROL SCENARIO

Gender identity was found to influence the evaluation of the parent brand for all aspects except for attitude towards the brand. Self-concept was evidenced to influence brand evaluation, with actual self-concept exerting a stronger influence on brand evaluation than ideal self-concept. Furthermore, self-concept was found to moderate the relationship between gender identity and brand evaluation. A difference between the two product category types was only observed for attitude towards the brand. In contrast, differences between the two brand genders were observed for all aspects of brand evaluation except attitude towards the brand.